THE

WORKS

OF THE

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PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH, NEW YORK.

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DISCOURSES

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

TO

THE FIRST CHURCH AND CONGREGATION

IN

NEW BEDFORD,

These Discourses,

ORIGINALLY PREPARED FOR THEIR BENEFIT,

ARE AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED,

BY THEIR

LATE PASTOR AND EVER OBLIGED FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

Cut off by ill health from a pastoral connexion most interesting to him, the Author of the following Discourses was desirous of leaving among the people of his late charge, some permanent record of the interest he has taken in them, of the words he has spoken to them, and of the satisfaction with which he has met them, from Sabbath to Sabbath, to meditate on the great themes of religion—a satisfaction, let him add, not marred by one moment's disagreement, nor by the altered eye of one individual, during the ten years' continuance of that most delicate and affecting relationship. Circumstances, he has thought, may justify a publication of this nature—friendship and kindness may give it value and utility in their limited circle, though it may not be destined to excite any interest in a wider sphere; and he ventures, therefore, to hope, that this volume may not be entirely useless nor uninteresting to that portion of the religious community generally, with which he has the happiness to be personally acquainted. To his friends—and he cannot deny himself the pleasure of including the few that he claims to be of that number in England—he offers this collection of Discourses, with as much anxiety as he ought, perhaps, to feel for any human opinion, but with an equal reliance on their candour and kindness.

New York, Feb. 24, 1835.

ON HUMAN NATURE.

PSALM viii. 4, 5: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour."

You will observe, my brethren, that in these words, two distinct, and, in a degree, opposite views are given of human nature. It is represented, on the one hand, as weak and low, and yet, on the other, as lofty and strong. At one moment, it presents itself to the inspired writer as poor, humble, depressed, and almost unworthy of the notice of its Maker. But, in the transition of a single sentence, we find him contemplating this same being, man, as exalted, glorious, and almost angelic. "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained," he says, "what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" And yet he adds, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour."

But, do not these contrasted statements make up, in fact, the only true view of human nature? Are they not conformable to the universal sense of mankind, and to the whole tenor and spirit of our religion? Whenever the human character is portrayed in colours altogether dark, or altogether bright; whenever the misanthrope pours out his scorn upon the wickedness and baseness of mankind, or the enthusiast lavishes his admiration upon their virtues; do we not always feel that there needs to be some qualification; that there is something to be said on the other side?

Nay, more; do not all the varying representations of human nature imply their opposites? Does not virtue, according to our idea of it, according to the universal idea of it, according to the scriptural representation of it—imply, that sins and sinful passions are struggled with, and overcome? And, on the contrary, does not sin, in its very nature, imply that there are high and sacred powers, capacities, and affections, which it violates?

In this view it appears to me, that all unqualified disparagement, as well as praise, of human nature, carries with it its own refutation; and it is to this point that I wish to invite your particular attention in the following discourse. Admitting all that can be asked on this subject by the strongest assertors of human depravity; admitting everything, certainly, that can be stated as a matter of fact; admitting that men are as bad as they are said to be, and substantially believing it too,—I shall argue, that the conclusion to be drawn is entirely the reverse of

that which usually is drawn. I shall argue, that the most strenuous, the most earnest, and indignant objections against human nature, imply the strongest concessions to its constitutional worth. I say then, and repeat, that objection here carries with it its own refutation; that the objector concedes much, very much, to human nature, by the very terms with which he inveighs against it.

It is not my sole purpose, however, to present any abstract or polemic argument. Rather let me attempt to offer some general and just views of human nature; and for this purpose, rather than for the sake of controversy, let me pass in brief review before you, some of the specific and disparaging opinions that have prevailed in the world concerning it—those, for instance, of the philosopher and the theologian.

In doing this, my purpose is, to admit that much of what they say is true; but to draw from it an inference quite different from theirs. I would admit, on one hand, that there is much evil in the human heart; but, at the same time, I would balance this view, and blend it with others that claim to be brought into the account. On the one hand, I would admit and enforce the objection of much and mournful evil in the world; but, on the other, I would prevent it from pressing on the heart, as a discouraging and dead weight of reprobation and obloquy.

It may appear to you, that the opinions which I have selected for our present consideration, are, each of them, brought into strange company; and yet they have an affinity which may not at once be suspected. It is singular, indeed, that we find in the same ranks, and waging the same war against all human self-respect, the most opposite descriptions of persons; the most religious with the most irreligious, the most credulous with the most sceptical. If any man supposes that it is his superior goodness, or purer faith, which leads him to think so badly of his fellow-men and of their very nature, he needs to be reminded that vicious and dissolute habits almost invariably and unerringly lead to the same result. The man who is taking the downward way, with almost every step, you will find, thinks worse of his nature and his species; till he concludes, if he can, that he was made only for sensual indulgence, and that all idea of a future, intellectual, and immortal existence is a dream. And so, if any man thinks that it is owing to his spirituality and heavenly-mindedness, that he pronounces the world so utterly corrupt, a mere mass of selfishness and deceit; he may be admonished, that nobody so thoroughly agrees with him as the man of the world, the shrewd, over-reaching, and knavish practiser on the weakness or the wickedness of his fellows. And, in the same way, the strict and high-toned theologian, as he calls himself, may unexpectedly find himself in company with the sceptical and scornful philosopher. No men have ever more bitterly decried and vilified human nature, than the infidel philosophers of the last century. They contended that man was too mean and contemptible a creature to be the subject of such an interposition as that recorded in the Gospel.

I. But I am to take up, in the first place, and more in detail, the objection of the sceptical philosopher.

The philosopher says, that man is a mean creature; not so much a degraded being, as he is, originally, a poor insignificant creature; an animal, some grades above others, perhaps, but still an animal; for

whom, to suppose the provision of infinite mercy and of immortality to be made, is absurd.

It is worth noticing, as we pass, and I therefore remark, the striking connexion which is almost always found between different parts of every man's belief or scepticism. I never knew one to think wrongly about God, but he very soon began to think wrongly about man: or else the reverse is the process, and it is not material which. The things always go together. He who conceives of the Almighty as a severe, unjust, and vindictive being, will regard man as a slave, will *make* him the slave of *superstition*, will take a sort of superstitious pleasure or merit in magnifying his wickedness or unworthiness. And he who thinks meanly of human nature, will think coldly and distrustfully of the Supreme Being, will think of him as withdrawing himself to a sublime distance from such a nature. In other words, he who does not take the Christian view, and has no apprehension of the infinite love of God, will not believe that he has made man with such noble faculties, or for such noble ends, as we assert. The discussion proposed is obviously, even in this view, one of no trifling importance.

Let us, then, proceed to the objection of our philosopher. He says, I repeat, that man is a mean creature, fit only for the earth on which he is placed, fit for no higher destination than to be buried in its bosom, and there to find his end. The philosopher rejects what he calls the theologian's dream about the fall. He says that man needed no fall in order to be a degraded creature; that he is, and was, always and originally a degraded creature; a being not fallen from virtue, but incapable of virtue; a being not corrupted from his innocence, but one who never possessed innocence; a being never of heaven, but a being only of earth, and sense, and appetite, and never fit for anything better.

Now let us go at once to the main point in argument, which is proposed to be illustrated in this discourse. What need, I ask, of speaking of human debasement in such indignant or sneering tones, if it is the real and only nature of man? There is nothing to blame or scorn in man, if he is naturally such a poor and insignificant creature. If he was made only for the senses and appetites, what occasion, I pray, for any wonder or abuse that he is sensual and debased? Why waste invectives on such a being? The truth is, that this zealous depreciation of human nature betrays a consciousness that it is not so utterly worthless after all. It is no sufficient reply to say, that this philosophic scorn has been aroused by the extravagance of human pretensions. For if these pretensions were utterly groundless, if the being who aspired to virtue were fit only for sensation, or if the being whose thoughts swelled to the great hope of immortality, were only a higher species of the animal creation, and must share its fate—if this were true, his pretensions could justly create only a feeling of wonder, or of sadness.

We might say much to rebut the charge of the philosopher; so injurious to the soul, so fatal to all just self-respect, so fatal to all elevated virtue and devotion. We might say that the most ordinary tastes and the most trifling pursuits of man, carry, to the observant eye, marks of the nobler mind. We might say that vain trifling, and that fleeting, dying pleasure, does not satisfy the immortal want; and that toil does not crush the soul, that the body cannot weigh down the

spirit to its own drudgery. We might ask our proud reasoner, moreover, whence the moral and metaphysical philosopher obtains the facts with which he speculates, argues, and builds up his admirable theory? And our sceptic must answer, that the metaphysical and moral philosopher goes to human nature; that he goes to it in its very attitudes of toil and its free actings of passion, and thence takes his materials and his form, and his living charm of representation, which delight the world. We might say still more. We might say that all there is of vastness, and grandeur, and beauty in the world, lies in the conception of man; that the immensity of the universe, as we term it, is but the reach of his imagination—that immensity, in other words, is but the image of his own idea; that there is no eternity to him, but that which exists in his own unbounded thought; that there is no God to man, but what has been conceived of in his own capacious and unmeasured understanding.

These things we might say; but I will rather meet the objector on his own ground, confident that I may triumph even there. I take up the indignant argument, then. I allow that there is much weight and truth in it, though it brings me to a different conclusion. I feel that man is, in many respects and in many situations—and, above all, compared with what he should be—that man is a mean creature. I feel it, as I should, if I saw some youth of splendid talents and promise plunging in at the door of vice and infamy. Yes, it *is* meanness for a MAN—who stands in the presence of his God and among the sons of heaven—it is meanness in him to play the humble part of sycophant before his fellows—to fawn and flatter, to make his very soul a slave, barely to gain from that fellow-man his smile, his nod, his hand, his favour, his vote, his patronage. It is meanness for a *man* to prevaricate and falsify, to sell his conscience for advantage, to barter his soul for gain, to give his noble brow to the smiting blush of shame, or his cheek to the deadly paleness of convicted dishonesty. Yes, it is a degradation unutterable, for a man to steep his soul in gross, sensual, besotting indulgence; to live for this, and in this one poor, low sensation, to shut up the mind with all its boundless range; to sink to a debasement more than beastly: below where an animal can go. Yes, all this, and much beside this, is meanness; but why, now I ask—why do we speak of it thus, unless it is because we speak of a being who might have put on such a nobility of soul, and such a loftiness and independence, and spiritual beauty and glory, as would fling rebuke upon all the hosts of sin and temptation, and cast dimness upon all the splendour of the world?

It may be proper, under the head of philosophical objections, to take notice of the celebrated maxim of Rochefoucauld; since it is among the written, and has as good a title as others to be among the philosophic objections. This maxim is, that we take a sort of pleasure in the disappointments and miseries of others, and are pained at their good fortune and success. If this maxim were intended to fix upon mankind the charge of pure, absolute, disinterested malignity, and if it could be sustained, it would be fatal to my argument. If I believed this, I should believe not only in total, but in diabolical depravity. And I am aware that the apologists for human nature, receiving the maxim in this light, have usually contented themselves with indignantly

denying its truth. I shall however, for myself take different ground. I suppose, and I admit, that the maxim is true to a certain extent. Yet I deny that the feelings on which it is founded are malignant. They may be selfish, they may be bad; but they are not malicious and diabolical. But let us explain. It should be premised, that there is nothing wrong in our desiring the goods and advantages of life, provided the desire be kept within proper bounds. Suppose, then, that you are pursuing the same object with your neighbour,—a situation, an office, for instance,—and suppose that he succeeds. His success, at the first disclosure of it to you, will, of course, give you a degree of pain; and for this reason—it immediately brings the sense of your own disappointment. Now it is not wrong, perhaps, that you do regret your own failure; it is probably unavoidable that you should. You feel, perhaps, that you need or deserve the appointment more than your rival. You cannot help, therefore, on every account, regretting that he has obtained it. It does not follow that you wish him any less happy. You may make the distinction in your own mind. You may say,—"I am glad he is happy, but I am sorry he has the place; I wish he could be as happy in some other situation." Now, all this, so far from being malignant, is scarcely selfish; and even when the feeling, in a very bad mind, is altogether selfish, yet it is very different from a malignant pain at another's good fortune. But now, let us extend the case a little, from immediate rivalship, to that general competition of interests which exists in society—a competition which the selfishness of men makes to be far more than is necessary, and conceives to be far greater than it is. There is an erroneous idea, or imagination, shall I call it—and certainly it is one of the moral delusions of the world,—that something gained by another is something lost to one's self; and hence the feeling, before described, may arise at almost any indifferent instance of good fortune. But it always rises in this proportion:—it is stronger, the nearer the case comes to direct competition. You do not envy a rich man in China, nor a great man in Tartary. But if envy, as it has been sometimes called, were pure malignity, a man should be sorry that any body is happy, that any body is fortunate or honoured in the world. But this is not true; it does not apply to human nature. If ever you feel pain at the successes or acquisitions of another, it is when they come into comparison or contrast with your own failures or deficiencies. You feel that those successes or acquisitions might have been your own; you regret, and perhaps rightly, that they are not; and then, you insensibly slide into the very wrong feeling of regret that they belong to another. This is envy; and it is sufficiently base; but it is not purely malicious, and it is, in fact, the perversion of a feeling originally capable of good and valuable uses.

But I must pursue the sceptical philosopher a step farther—into actual life. The term philosopher, may seem to be but ill applied here; but we have probably all of us known or heard those, who, pretending to have a considerable *knowledge of the world*, if not much other knowledge, take upon them, with quite an air of philosophic superiority, to pronounce human nature nothing but a mass of selfishness; and to say, that this mass, whenever it is refined, is only refined into luxury and licentiousness, duplicity and knavery. Some simple souls, they suppose, there may be in the retired corners of the earth,

that are walking in the chains of mechanical habit or superstitious piety, who have not the knowledge to understand, nor the courage to seek, what they want. But the moment they do act freely, they act, says our objector, upon the selfish principle. And this, he maintains, is the principle which, in fact, governs the world. Nay, more, he avers that it is the only reasonable and sufficient principle of action; and freely confesses that it is his own.

Let me ask you here to keep distinctly in view the ground which the objector now assumes. There are talkers against human virtue, who never think, however, of going to this length; men, in fact, who are a great deal better than their theory; whose example, indeed, refutes their theory. But there are worse objectors, and worse men; vicious and corrupt men; sensualists—sensualists in philosophy and in practice alike, who would gladly believe all the rest of the world as bad as themselves. And these are objectors, I say, who, like the objections before stated, refute themselves.

For who is this small philosopher, that smiles either at the simplicity of all honest men, or at the simplicity of all honest defenders of them? He is, in the first place, a man who stands up before us, and has the face to boast that he is himself without principle. No doubt he thinks other men as bad as himself. A man necessarily, perhaps, judges the actions of other men by his own feelings. He has no other interpreter. The honest man, therefore, will often presume honesty in another; and the generous man, generosity. And so the selfish man can see nothing around him but selfishness; and the knave nothing but dishonesty; and he who never felt anything of a generous and self-devoting piety, who never bowed down in that holy and blessed worship, can see in prayer nothing but the offering of selfish fear,—in piety nothing but a slavish superstition.

In the next place; this sneerer at all virtue and piety not only imagines others to be as destitute of principle as himself, but, to some extent, he makes them such, or makes them seem such. His eye of pride chills every goodly thing it looks upon. His breath of scorn blights every generous virtue where it comes. His supple and crafty hand puts all men upon their guard. They become like himself, for the time; they become more crafty while they deal with him. How shall any noble aspiration, any high and pure thoughts, any benevolent purposes, any sacred and holy communing, venture into the presence of the proud and selfish scorner of all goodness! It has been said that the letters your friends write to you will show their opinion of your temper and tastes. And so it is, to a certain extent, with conversation.

But, in the third place; where, let us ask, has this man studied human nature? Lord Chesterfield observes—and the observation is worthy of a man who never seems to have looked beneath the surface of anything—that the court and the camp are the places in which a knowledge of mankind is to be gained. And we may remark, that it is from two fields not altogether dissimilar, that our sceptic about virtue always gains his knowledge of mankind: I mean, from fashion and business; the two most artificial spheres of active life. Our objector has witnessed heartless civilities, and imagines that he is acquainted with the deep fountains of human nature. Or, he has been out into the paths of business, and seen men girt up for competition, and acting

in that artificial state of things which trade produces; and he imagines that he has witnessed the free and unsophisticated workings of the human heart; he supposes that the laws of trade are also the laws of human affection. He thinks himself deeply read in the book of the human heart, that unfathomable mystery, because he is acquainted with notes and bonds, with cards and compliments.

How completely, then, is this man disqualified from judging of human nature! There *is* a power, which few possess, which none have attained in perfection; a power to unlock the retired, the deeper, and nobler sensibilities of men's minds, to draw out the hoarded and hidden virtues of the soul, to open the fountains which custom and ceremony and reserve have sealed up: it is a power, I repeat, which few possess —how evidently does our objector possess it not—and yet without some portion of which, no man should think himself qualified to study human nature. Men know but little of each other, after all; but little know how many good and tender affections are suppressed and kept out of sight, by diffidence, by delicacy, by the fear of appearing awkward or ostentatious, by habits of life, by education, by sensitiveness, and even by strong sensibility, that sometimes puts on a hard and rough exterior for its own check or protection. And the power that penetrates all these barriers must be an extraordinary one. There must belong to it charity, and kindness, and forbearance, and sagacity, and fidelity to the trust which the opening heart reposes in it. But how peculiarly, I repeat, how totally devoid of this power of opening and unfolding the real character of his fellows, must be the scoffer at human nature!

I have said that this man gathers his conclusions from the most formal and artificial aspects of the world. He never could have drawn them from the holy retreats of domestic life—to say nothing of those deeper privacies of the heart of which I have just been speaking; he never could have drawn his conclusions from those family scenes, where unnumbered, nameless, minute, and indescribable sacrifices are daily made by thousands and ten thousands all around us; he never could have drawn them from the self-devoting mother's cares, or from the grateful return, the lovely assiduity and tenderness of filial affection; he never could have derived his contemptuous inference from the sick-room, where friendship, in silent prayer, watches and tends its charge. No: he dare not go out from our dwellings, from our temples, from our hospitals,—he dare not tread upon the holy places of the land, the high places, where the devout have prayed, and the brave have died; and proclaim that patriotism is a visionary sentiment, and piety a selfish delusion, and charity a pretence, and virtue a name!

II. But it is time that we come now to the objection of the theologian. And I go at once to the single and strong point of his objection. The theologian says that human nature is bad and corrupt. Now, taking this language in the practical and popular sense, I find no difficulty in agreeing with the theologian. And, indeed, if he would confine himself —leaving vague and general declamation and technical phraseology— if he would confine himself to facts;—if he would confine himself to a description of actual bad qualities and dispositions in men,—I think he could not well go too far. Nay, more, I am not certain that any theologian's description, so far as it is of this nature, has gone deep enough into the frightful mass of human depravity. For it requires an acute

perception, that is rarely possessed, and a higher and holier conscience, perhaps, than belongs to any, to discover, and to declare *how* bad, and degraded, and unworthy a being, a *bad man* is. I confess that nothing would beget in me a higher respect for a man, than a real—not a theological and factitious—but a real and deep sense of human sinfulness and unworthiness; of the mighty wrong which man does to himself, to his religion, and to his God, when he yields to the evil and accursed inclinations that find place in him. This moral indignation is not half strong enough in those who profess to talk the most about human depravity. And the objection to them is, not that they feel too much or speak too strongly, about the actual wickedness, the actual and distinct sins of the wicked; but they speak too generally and vaguely of human wickedness,—that they speak with too little discrimination to every man as if he were a murderer or a monster,—that they speak, in fine, too argumentatively, and too much, if I may say so, with a sort of argumentative satisfaction, as if they were glad that they could make this point so strong.

I know, then, and admit, that men, and all men, more or less, are, alas! sinful and bad. I know that the catalogue of human transgressions is long, and dark, and mournful. The words, pride, and envy, and anger, and selfishness, and base indulgence, are words of lamentation. They are words that should make a man weep when he pronounces them, and most of all when he applies them to himself, or to his fellow-men.

But what now is the inference from all this? Is it, that man is an utterly debased, degraded, and contemptible creature?—that there is nothing in him to be revered or respected?—that the human heart presents nothing to us but a mark for cold and blighting reproach? Without wishing to assert anything paradoxical, it seems to me that the very reverse is the inference.

I should reason thus upon this point. I should say, it must be a noble creature that can so offend. I should say, there must be a contrast of light and shade, to make the shade so deep. It *is* no ordinary being, surely—it is a being of conscience, of moral powers and glorious capacities, that calls from us such intense reproach and indignation. We never so arraign the animal creation. The very power of sinning is a lofty and awful power! It is, in the language of our holiest poet, "the excess of glory observed." Neither is it a power standing alone. It is not a solitary, unqualified, diabolical power of evil; a dark and cold abstraction of wickedness. No, it is clothed with other qualities. No, it has dread attendants—attendants, I had almost said, that dignify even the wrong. A waiting conscience, visitings—oh! visitings of better thoughts, calls of honour and self-respect, come to the sinner; terrific admonition whispering on his secret ear; prophetic warning pointing him to the dim and veiled shadows of future retribution; and the all-penetrating, all-surrounding idea of an avenging God, are present with him: and the right arm of the felon and the transgressor is lifted up, amidst lightnings of conviction and thunderings of reproach. I can tremble at such a being as this; I can pity him; I can weep for him; but I cannot scorn him.

The very words of condemnation which we apply to sin are words of comparison. When we describe the act of the transgressor as mean, for

instance, we recognize, I repeat, the nobility of his nature; and when we say that his offence is a degradation, we imply a certain distinction. And so *to do wrong*, implies a noble power—the very power which constitutes the glory of heaven—the *power to do right*. And thus it is, as I apprehend, that the inspired teachers speak of the wickedness and unworthiness of man. They seem to do it under a sense of his better capacities and higher distinction. They speak as if he had wronged himself. And when they use the words ruin and perdition, they announce, in affecting terms, the *worth* of that which is reprobate and lost. Paul, when speaking of his transgressions, says, "not I, but the sin that dwelleth in me." There was a better nature in him, that resisted evil, though it did not always successfully resist. And we read of the prodigal son, in terms which have always seemed to me of the most affecting import—that when he came to the sense of his duty, he "came—to *himself*." Yes, the sinner is beside himself; and there is no peace, no reconciliation of his conduct to his nature, till he returns from his evil ways. Shall we not say, then, that his nature demands virtue and rectitude to satisfy it?

True it is, and I would not be one to weaken nor obscure the truth, that man is sinful; but he is not satisfied with sinning. Not his conscience only, but his wants, his natural affections, are not satisfied. He pays deep penalties for his transgressions. And these sufferings proclaim a higher nature. The pain, the disappointment, the dissatisfaction, that wait on an evil course, show that the human soul was not made to be the instrument of sin, but its lofty avenger. The desolated affections, the haggard countenance, the pallid and sunken cheek, the sighings of grief, proclaim that these are ruins indeed; but they proclaim that something noble has fallen into ruin—proclaim it by signs mournful, yet venerable, like the desolations of an ancient temple, like its broken walls and falling columns, and the hollow sounds of decay that sink down heavily among its deserted recesses.

The sinner, I repeat it, is a sufferer. He seeks happiness in low and unworthy objects—that is his sin: but he does not find it there—and that is his glory. No, he does not find it there: he returns disappointed and melancholy, and there is nothing on earth so eloquent as his grief. Read it in the pages of a Byron and a Burns. There is nothing in literature so touching as these lamentations of noble but erring natures, in the vain quest of a happiness which sin and the world can never give. The sinner is often dazzled by earthly fortune and pomp, but it is in the very midst of these things, that he sometimes most feels their emptiness; that his higher nature most feels that it is solitary and unsatisfied. It is in the giddy whirl of frivolous pursuits and amusements that his soul oftentimes is sick and weary with trifles and vanities: that "he says of laughter, it is mad; and of mirth, what doeth it?"

And yet it is not bare disappointment, nor the mere destitution of happiness caused by sin,—it is not these alone that give testimony to a better nature. There is a higher power that bears sway in the human heart. It is remorse—sacred, uncompromising remorse, that will hear of no selfish calculations of pain and pleasure; that *demands* to suffer; that, of all sacrifices on earth, save those of benevolence, brings the only willing victim. What lofty revenge does the abused soul thus

take for its offences: never, no, never, in all its anger, punishing another, as, in its justice, it punishes itself!

Such, then, are the attributes that still dwell in the dark grandeur of the soul; the beams of original light, of which amidst its thickest darkness it is never shorn. That in which all the nobleness of earth resides, should not be *condemned* even, but with awe and trembling. It is our treasure; and if this is lost, all is lost. Let us take care, then, that we be not unjust. Man is not an angel; but neither is he a demon, nor a brute. The evil he does is not committed with brutish insensibility, nor with diabolical satisfaction. And the evil, too, is often disguised under forms that do not, at once, permit him to see its real character. His affections become wrong by excess; passions bewilder; semblances delude; interests ensnare; example corrupts. And yet no tyrant over men's thoughts, no unworthy seeker of their adulation, no pander for their guilty pleasures, could ever make the human heart what he would. And in making it what he has, he has often found that he had to work with stubborn materials. No perseverence of endeavour, nor devices of ingenuity, nor depths of artifice, have ever equalled those which are sometimes employed to corrupt the heart from its youthful simplicity and uprightness.

In endeavouring to state the views which are to be entertained of human nature, I have, at present, and before I reverse the picture, but one further observation to make: and that is on the spirit and tone with which it is to be viewed and spoken of. I have wished, even in speaking of its faults, to awaken a feeling of reverence and regret for it, such as would arise within us, on beholding a noble but mutilated statue, or the work of some divine architect in ruins, or some majestic object in nature, which had been marred by the rending of this world's elements and changes. Above all other objects, surely human nature deserves to be regarded with these sentiments. The ordinary tone of conversation in allusion to this subject, the sneering remark on mankind, as a set of poor and miserable creatures, the cold and bitter severity, whether of philosophic scorn or theological rancour, become no being; least of all, him who has part in this common nature. He, at least, should speak with consideration and tenderness. And if he must speak of faults and sins, he would do well to imitate an Apostle, and to tell these things, even weeping. His tone should be that of forbearance and pity. His words should be recorded in a book of Lamentations. "How is the gold become dim," he might exclaim in the words of an ancient lamentation,—"how is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed! The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed but as earthen vessels, the work of the hands of the potter!"

ON HUMAN NATURE.

PSALM viii. 5: "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour."

I HAVE endeavoured, in my last discourse, to show that the very objections which are usually brought against human nature, imply, in the very fact, in the very spirit and tone of them, the strongest concessions to its worth. I shall now proceed to the direct argument in its favour. It is the constitutional worth of human nature that we have thus far considered, rather than its moral worth or absolute virtue. We have considered the indignant reproaches against its sin and debasement, whether of the philosopher or the theologian, as evidence of their own conviction, that it was made for something better. We have considered that moral constitution of human nature, by which it was evidently made not to be the slave of sin, but its conqueror.

Let us now proceed to take some account of its moral traits and acquisitions. I say its moral *traits* and acquisitions: for there are feelings of the human mind, which scarcely rise to the character of acquisitions, which are involuntary impulses; and yet which possess a nature as truly moral, though not in as high a degree, as any voluntary acts of virtue. Such is the simple, natural love of excellence. It bears the same relation to moral effort as spontaneous reason does to reflection or logical effort: and what is spontaneous, in both cases, is the very foundation of the acquisitions that follow. Thus, the involuntary perception of a few axioms lies at the foundation of mathematical science; and so from certain spontaneous impressions of truth springs all knowledge; and in the same manner, our spontaneous moral impressions are the germs of the highest moral efforts.

Of these spontaneous impressions I am to speak in the first place, and then to produce in favour of human nature the testimony of its higher and more confirmed virtues.

But I am not willing to enter upon this theme without first offering a remark or two, to prevent any misconception of the purpose for which I again bring forward this discussion. It is not to bring to the altar at which I minister, an oblation of flattery to my fellow-worshippers. It is not to make any man feel his moral dangers to be less, or to make him easier in reference to that solemn spiritual trust that is committed to his nature; but the very contrary. It is not to make him think less of his sins, but more. It is not, in fine, to build up any one theological dogma, or to beat down another.

My view of the subject, if I may state it without presumption, is this—that there is a treasure in human nature of which most men are

not conscious, and with which none are yet fully acquainted! If you had met in a retired part of the country with some rustic youth, who bore in his character the indications of a most sublime genius, and if you saw that he was ignorant of it, and that those around him were ignorant of it, you would look upon him with extreme, with enthusiastic interest, and you would be anxious to bring him into the light, and to rear him up to his proper sphere of distinction. This, may I be permitted to say, illustrates the view which I take of human nature. I believe that there is something in every man's heart upon which he ought to look as a found treasure; something upon which he ought to look with awe and wonder; something which should make him tremble when he thinks of sacrificing it to sin; something, also, to encourage and cheer him in every endeavour after virtue and purity. Far be it from me to say that that something is confirmed goodness, or is the degree of goodness which is necessary to make him happy here or hereafter; or, that it is something to rest upon, or to rely upon, in the anticipation of God's judgment. Still I believe that he who says there is *nothing* good in him, *no* foundation, no feeling of goodness, says what is not true, what is not just to himself, what is not just to his Maker's beneficence.

I will refer now to those moral traits, to those involuntary moral impressions, of which I have already spoken.

Instances of this nature might undoubtedly be drawn from every department of social life; from social kindness, from friendship, from parental and filial love, from the feelings of spontaneous generosity, pity, and admiration, which every day kindles into life and warmth around us. But since these feelings are often alleged to be of a doubtful character, and are so, indeed, to a certain extent, since they are often mixed up with interested considerations which lessen their weight in this argument, I am about to appeal to cases, which, though they are not often brought into the pulpit, will appear to you, I trust, to be excused, if not justified, by the circumstance that they are altogether apposite cases; cases, that is to say, of disinterested feeling.

The world is inundated in this age with a perfect deluge of fictitious productions. I look, indeed, upon the exclusive reading of such works, in which too many employ their leisure time, as having a very bad and dangerous tendency: but this is not to my purpose at present. I only refer now to the well-known extent and fascination of this kind of reading, for the purpose of putting a single question. I ask, what is the moral character of these productions? Not high enough, certainly; but then I ask still more specifically, whether the preference is given to virtue or to vice, in these books, and to which of them the feelings of the reader generally lean? Can there be one moment's doubt? Is not virtue usually held up to admiration, and are not the feelings universally enlisted in its favour? Must not the character of the leading personage in the story, to satisfy the public taste, be good, and is not his career pursued with intense interest to the end? Now, reverse the case. Suppose his character to be bad. Suppose him ungenerous, avaricious, sensual, debased. Would he then be admired? Would he then enlist the sympathies even of the most frivolous reader? It is unnecessary to answer the question. Here, then, is a right and virtuous feeling at work in the community: and it is a perfectly disinterested feeling.

Here, I say, is a right and virtuous feeling, beating through the whole heart of society. Why should any one say it is not a feeling; that it is conscience; that it is mere approbation? It *is* a feeling, if anything is. There is intense interest, there are tears, to testify that it is a feeling.

If, then, I put such a book into the hands of any reader, and if he feels this, let him not tell me that there is nothing good in him. There may not be goodness, fixed, habitual goodness in him; but there is something good, out of which goodness may grow.

Of the same character are the most favourite popular songs and ballads. The chosen themes of these compositions are patriotism, generosity, pity, love. Now it is known that nothing sinks more deeply into the heart of nations, and yet these are their themes. Let me make the ballads of a people, some one has said, and let who will make their laws; and yet he must construct them on these principles; he must compose them in praise of patriotism, honour, fidelity, generous sympathy, and pure love. I say, pure love. Let the passion be made a base one; let it be capricious, mercenary, or sensual, and it instantly loses the public sympathy: the song would be instantly hissed from the stage of the vilest theatre that ever was opened. No, it must be true-hearted affection, holding its faith and fealty bright and unsoiled amidst change of fortunes, amidst poverty, and disaster, and separation, and reproach. The popular taste will hardly allow the affection to be as prudent as it ought to be. And when I listen to one of these popular ballads or songs, that tells—it may be not in the best taste—but which tells the thrilling tale of high, disinterested, magnanimous fidelity to the sentiments of the heart; that tells of pure and faithful affection, which no cold looks can chill, which no storms of misfortune can quench, which prefers simple merit to all worldly splendour; when I observe this, I say, I see a noble feeling at work; and that which many will pronounce to be silly, through a certain shamefacedness about their own sensibility, I regard as respectable and honourable to human nature.

Now I say again, as I said before, let these popular compositions set forth the beauties of vice; let them celebrate meanness, parsimony, fraud, or cowardice, and would they dwell, as they now do, in the habitations, and in the hearts, and upon the lips of whole nations? What a disinterested testimony is this to the charms of virtue! What evidence that men feel those charms, though they may not be won by them to virtuous lives! The national songs of a people do not embrace cold sentiments: they are not sung or heard with cold approbation. They fire the breasts of millions; they draw tears from the eyes of ten thousand circles, that are gathered in the homes of human affection.

And the power of music, too, as a separate thing—the power of simple melody I mean—lies very much, as it seems to me, in the sentiments and affections it awakens. There is a pleasure to the ear, doubtless; but there is a pleasure, also, to the heart; and this is the greater pleasure. But what kind of pleasure is it? Does that melody which addresses the universal mind appeal to vile and base passions? Is not the state into which it naturally throws almost every mind, favourable to gentle and kind emotions, to lofty efforts and heroic sacrifices? But if the human heart possessed no high nor holy feelings, if it were entirely alien to them, then the music which excites them,

should excite them to voluptuousness, cruelty, strife, fraud, avarice, and to all the mean aims and indulgences of a selfish disposition.

Let not these illustrations—which are adopted, to be sure, partly because they are fitted to unfold a moral character where no credit has usually been given for it, and because, too, they present at once universal and disinterested manifestations of human feeling—let not these illustrations, I say, be thought to furnish an unsatisfactory inference, because they are drawn from the lighter actions of the human mind. The feeling in all these cases is not superficial nor feeble; and the slighter the occasion that awakens it, the stronger is our argument. If the leisure and recreations of men yield such evidence of deep moral feeling, what are they not capable of when armed with lofty purposes and engaged in high duties? If the instrument yields such noble strains, though incoherent and intermitted, to the slightest touch, what might not be done if the hand of skill were laid upon it, to bring out all its sublime harmonies? Oh! that some powerful voice might speak to this inward nature—powerful as the story of heroic deeds, moving as the voice of song, arousing as the trumpet-call to honour and victory! My friends, if we are among those who are pursuing the sinful way, let us be assured that we know not ourselves yet; we have not searched the depths of our nature; we have not communed with its deepest wants; we have not listened to its strongest and highest affections; if we had done all this, we could not abuse it as we do; nor could we neglect it as we do.

But it is time to pass from these instances of spontaneous and universal feeling to those cases in which such feeling, instead of being occasional and evanescent, is formed into a prevailing habit and a consistent and fixed character; to pass from good affections, transient, uncertain, and unworthily neglected, to good men, who are permanently such, and worthy to be called such. Our argument from this source is more confined, but it gains strength by its compression within a narrower compass.

I shall not be expected here to occupy the time with asserting or proving that there are good men in the world. It will be more important to reply to a single objection under this head, which would be fatal if it were just, and to point to some characteristics of human virtue, which prove its great and real worth. Let me, however, for a moment indulge myself in the simple assertion of what every mind, not entirely misanthropic, must feel to be true. I say, then, that there are good men in the world: there are good men everywhere. There are men who are good for goodness' sake. In obscurity, in retirement, beneath the shadow of ten thousand dwellings, scarcely known to the world, and never asking to be known, there are good men. In adversity, in poverty, amidst temptations, amidst all the severity of earthly trials, there are good men, whose lives shed brightness upon the dark clouds that surround them. Be it true, if we must admit the sad truth, that many are wrong, and persist in being wrong; that many are false to every holy trust, and faithless towards every holy affection; that many are estranged from infinite goodness; that many are coldly selfish and meanly sensual—yes, cold and dead to everything that is not wrapped up in their own little earthly interest, or more darkly wrapped up in the veil of fleshly appetites. Be it so; but I thank God,

that is not all that we are obliged to believe. No! there are true hearts amidst the throng of the false and the faithless. There are warm and generous hearts which the cold atmosphere of surrounding selfishness never chills; and eyes, unused to weep for personal sorrow, which often overflow with sympathy for the sorrows of others. Yes, there are good men, and true men: I thank them, I bless them for what they are: I thank them for what they are to me. What do I say—why do I utter my weak benediction? God from on high doth bless them, and he giveth his angels charge to keep them; and nowhere in the holy record are there words more precious or strong than those in which it is written that God loveth these righteous ones. Such men are there. Let not their precious virtues be distrusted. As surely and as evidently as some men have obeyed the calls of ambition and pleasure, so surely, and so evidently, have other men obeyed the voice of conscience, and "chosen rather to suffer with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Why, every meek man suffers in a conflict keener far than the contest for honour and applause. And there are such men, who, amidst injury, and insult, and misconstruction, and the pointed finger, and the scornful lip of pride, stand firm in their integrity and allegiance to a loftier principle, and still their throbbing hearts in prayer, and hush them to the gentle emotions of kindness and pity. Such witnesses there are even in this bad world; signs that a redeeming work is going forward amidst its mournful derelictions; proofs that it is not a world forsaken of heaven; pledges that it will not be forsaken; tokens that cheer and touch every good and thoughtful mind, beyond all other power of earth to penetrate and enkindle it.

I believe that what I have now said is a most legitimate argument for the worth of human nature. As a matter of fact, it will not be denied that such beings as I have represented, there are. And I now further maintain, and this is the most material point in the argument, that such men—that good men, in other words—are to be regarded as the rightful and legitimate representatives of human nature. Surely, not man's sins, but his virtues, not his failure, but his success, should teach us what to think of his nature. Just as we should look, for their real character, to the productions nourished by a favourable soil and climate, and not to the same plants or trees as they stand withered and stunted in a barren desert.

But here we are met with the objection before referred to. It is said that a man's virtues come from God; and his *sins* only from his own nature. And thus—for this is the result of the objection—from the estimate of what is human, all human excellence is at once cut off, by this fine discrimination of theological subtilty. Unreasonable as this seems to me—if the objector will forget his theology for one moment—I will answer it. I say, then, that the influence of the good spirit of God does not destroy our natural powers, but guides them into a right direction; that it does not create anything unnatural, surely, nor supernatural in man, but what is suitable to his nature; that, in fine, his virtues are as truly the voluntary putting forth of his native powers as his sins are. Else would his virtues have no worth. Human nature, in short, is the noble stock on which these virtues grow. With heaven's rain, and sunshine, and genial influence, do you say? Be it so; still they are no less human, and *show the stock* from

which they spring. When you look over a grain-field, and see some parts more luxuriant than others, do you say that they are of a different nature from the rest? And when you look abroad upon the world, do you think it right to take Tartars and Hottentots as specimens of the race? And why, then, shall you regard the worst of men, rather than the best, as samples of human nature and capability?

The way, then, is open for us to claim for human nature—however that nature is breathed upon by heavenly influences—to claim for human nature all the excellent fruits that have sprung from it. And they are not few; they are not small; they are not contemptible.

They have cost too much—if there were no other consideration to give them value—they have cost too much to be thus estimated.

The true idea of human nature is not that it passively and spontaneously produces its destined results; but that, placed in a fearful contest between good and evil, it is *capable* of glorious exertions and attainments. Human virtue is the result of effort and patience, in circumstances that most severely try it. Human excellence is much of it gained at the expense of self-denial. All the wisdom and worth in the world, are a struggle with ignorance, and infirmity, and temptation; often with sickness and pain. There is not an admirable character presented before you, but it has cost years and years of toil, and watching, and self-government, to form it. You see the victor, but you forget the battle. And you forget it, for a reason that exalts and ennobles the fortitude and courage of the combatant. You forget it, because the conflict has been carried on, all silently, in his own bosom. You forget it, because no sound has gone forth, and no wreath of fame has awaited the conqueror.

And *what* has he gained?—to refer to but one more of the many views that might be urged—what has he gained? I answer, what is worth too much to be slightly estimated. The catalogue of human virtues is not brief nor dull. What glowing words do we involuntarily put into that record? with what feelings do we hallow it? The charm of youthful excellence; the strong integrity of manhood; the venerable piety of age; unsullied honour; unswerving truth; fidelity; magnanimity; self-sacrifice; martyrdom, ay, and the spirit of martyrdom in many a form of virtue; sacred friendship, with its disinterested toil, ready to die for those it loves; noble patriotism, slain in its high places, beautiful in death; holy philanthropy, that pours out its treasure and its life;—dear and blessed virtues of humanity! (we are ready to exclaim)—what human heart does not cherish you?—bright cloud that hath passed on with "the sacramental host of God's elect," through ages! how dark and desolate but for you would be this world's history!

My friends, I have spoken of the reality and worth of virtue, and I have spoken of it as a part of human nature, not surely to awaken a feeling of pride, but to lead you and myself to an earnest aspiration after that excellence which embraces the chief welfare and glory of our nature. A cold disdain of our species, an indulgence of sarcasm, a feeling that is always ready to distrust and disparage every indication of virtuous principle, or an utter despair of the moral fortunes of our race, will not help the purpose in view, but must have a powerful tendency to hinder its accomplishment.

Unhappy is it that any are left, by any possibility, to doubt the vir-

tues of their kind! Let us do something to wipe away from the history of human life that fatal reproach. Let us make that best of contributions to the stock of human happiness, an example of goodness that shall disarm such gloomy and chilling scepticism, and win men's hearts to virtue. I have received many benefits from my fellow-beings; but no gift in their power to bestow can ever impart such a pure and thrilling delight as one bright action, one lovely virtue, one character that shines with all the enrapturing beauty of goodness.

Who would not desire to confer such benefits on the world as these? Who would not desire to leave such memorials behind him? Such memorials have been left on earth; the virtues of the departed, but for ever dear, hallow and bless many of our dwellings, and call forth tears that lose half their bitterness in gratitude and admiration. Yes, there are such legacies, and there are those on earth who have inherited them. Yes, there are men, poor men, whose parents have left them a legacy in their bare memory that they would not exchange—no, they would not exchange it, for boundless wealth. Let it be our care to bequeath to society and to the world blessings like these. "The memorial of virtue," saith the wisdom of Solomon, "is immortal. When it is present, men take example from it; and when it is gone, they desire it; it weareth a crown, and triumpheth for ever."

ON THE WRONG WHICH SIN DOES TO HUMAN NATURE.

PROVERBS viii. 36: "He that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul."

THIS is represented as the language of wisdom. The attribute of wisdom is personified throughout the chapter; and it closes its instructions with the declaration of our text: "He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul." The theme, then, which, in these words, is obviously presented for our meditation, is the wrong which the sinner does to himself, to his nature, to his own soul.

He does a wrong, indeed, to others. He does them, it may be, deep and heinous injury. The moral offender injures society, and injures it in the most vital part. Sin is, to all the dearest interests of society, a desolating power. It spreads misery through the world. It brings that misery into the daily lot of millions. Yes, the violence of anger, the exactions of selfishness, the corrodings of envy, the coldness of distrust, the contests of pride, the excesses of passion, the indulgences of sense, carry desolation into the very bosom of domestic life; and the crushed and bleeding hearts of friends and kindred, or of a larger circle of the suffering and oppressed, are everywhere witnesses, at once, and victims, of the mournful prevalence of this great evil.

But all the injury, great and terrible as it is, which the sinner does or can inflict upon others, is not equal to the injury that he inflicts upon himself. The evil that he does is, in almost all cases, the greater, the nearer it comes to himself; greater to his friends than to society at large; greater to his family than to his friends; and so it is greater to himself than it is to any other. Yes, it is in his own nature, whose glorious traits are dimmed and almost blotted out, whose pleading remonstrances are sternly disregarded, whose immortal hopes are rudely stricken down—it is in his own nature that he does a work so dark and mournful, and so fearful, that he ought to shudder and weep to think of it.

Does any one say "he is glad that it is so; glad that it is himself he injures most"? What a feeling, my brethren, of disinterested justice is that! How truly may it be said, that there is something good even in bad men. Yes, doubtless, there are those who in their remorse at an evil deed would be glad if all the injury and suffering could be their own. I rejoice in that testimony. But does that feeling make it any less true,—does not that feeling make it more true, that such a nature is wronged by base and selfish passions? Or, because it is a man's self,—because it is his own soul that he has most

injured,—because he has not only wronged others, but ruined himself, —is his course any the less guilty, or unhappy, or unnatural?

I say unnatural; and this is a point on which I wish to insist, in the consideration of that wrong which the moral offender does to himself. The sinner, I say, is to be pronounced an unnatural being. He has cast off the government of those powers of his nature, which, as being the loftiest, have the best right to reign over him—the government, that is to say, of his intellectual and moral faculties, and has yielded himself to meaner appetites. Those meaner appetites, though they belong to his nature, have no right, and he knows they have no right, to govern him. The rightful authority, the lawful sovereignty belongs, and he knows that it belongs, not to sense, but to conscience. To rebel against this is to sin against Nature. It is to rebel against Nature's order. It is to rebel against the government that God has set up within him. It is to obey, not venerable authority, but the faction which his passions have made within him.

Thus violence and misrule are always the part of transgression. Nay, every sin—I do not mean now the natural and unavoidable imperfection of a weak and ignorant being,—but every wilful moral offence is a monstrous excess and excrescence in the mind, a hideous deformity, a loathsome disease, a destruction, so far as it goes, of the purposes for which our nature was made. As well might you say of the diseased plant or tree, which is wasting all its vigour on the growth of one huge and unsightly deformity, that it is in a natural condition. Grant that the natural powers of the plant or tree are converted, or rather perverted to this misuse, and helped to produce this deformity; yet the deformity is not natural. Grant that sin is the possible or supposable, or that it is the actual, nay, and in this world, the common, result of moral freedom. It has been argued, I know, that what is common is natural; and grant that too. But sin, we believe, is *not* common in the whole moral universe. It is not the common result of universal moral action. And it is evidently not the just and legitimate result; it is not the fair and natural result; it violates all moral powers and responsibilities. If the mechanism of a vast manufactory were thrown into sudden disorder, the power which propels it—and a power, if you please, which the artificer had placed in it—might, indeed, spread destruction throughout the whole work; but would that be the natural course of things; the result for which the fabric was made? So passion, not in its natural state, but still natural passion, in its unnatural state of excess and fury, may spread disorder and destruction through the moral system; but wreck and ruin are not the proper order of any nature, whether material or moral.

The idea against which I am now contending, that sin is natural to us, and, in fact, that nothing else is natural—this popular and prevailing idea, is one, it seems to me, so fearful and fatal in its bearings—is one of such comprehensive and radical mischief, as to infect the religious state of all mankind, and to overshadow, almost with despair, the moral prospects of the world. There is no error, theological or moral, that appears to me so destructive as this. There is nothing that lies so near the very basis of all moral reform and spiritual improvement as this.

If it were a matter of mere doctrine, it would be of less consequence. But it is a matter of habitual feeling, I fear, and of deep-settled opinion.

The world, alas! is not only in the sad and awful condition of being filled with sin, and filled with misery in consequence, but of thinking that this is the natural order of things. Sin is a thing of course; it is taken for granted that it must exist very much in the way that it does; and men are everywhere easy about it,—they are everywhere sinking into worldliness and vice, as if they were acting out the principles of their moral constitution, and almost as if they were fulfilling the will of God. And thus it comes to pass, that that which should fill the world with grief, and astonishment, and horror, beyond all things else most horrible and lamentable, is regarded with perfect apathy, as a thing natural and necessary. Why, my brethren, if but the animal creation were found, on a sudden, disobedient to the principles of *their* nature, if they were ceasing to regard the guiding instincts with which they are endowed, and were rushing into universal madness, the whole world would stand aghast at the spectacle. But multitudes in the rational creation disobey a higher law and forsake a more sacred guidance; they degrade themselves below the beasts, or make themselves as entirely creatures of this world; they plunge into excess and profligacy; they bow down divine and immortal faculties to the basest uses, and there is no wonder, there is no horror, there is no consciousness of the wrong done to themselves. They say, "it is the natural course of things," as if they had solved the whole problem of moral evil. They say, "it is the way of the world," almost as if they thought it was the order of Providence. They say, "it is what men are," almost as if they thought it was what men were designed to be. And thus ends their comment, and with it all reasonable endeavour to make themselves better and happier.

If this state of prevailing opinion be as certainly erroneous as it is evidently dangerous, it is of the last importance, that every resistance, however feeble, should be offered to its fatal tendencies. Let us therefore consider, a little more in detail, the wrong which sin does to human nature. I say, then, that it does a wrong to every natural faculty and power of the mind.

Sin does a wrong to reason. There are instances, and not a few, in which sin, in various forms of vice and vanity, absolutely destroys reason. There are other and more numerous cases in which it employs that faculty, but employs it in a toil most degrading to its nature. There is reasoning, indeed, in the mind of a miser; the solemn arithmetic of profit and loss. There is reasoning in the schemes of unscrupulous ambition; the absorbing and agitating intrigue for office or honour. There is reasoning upon the modes of sensual pleasure; and the whole power of a very acute mind is sometimes employed and absorbed in plans, and projects, and imaginations of evil indulgence. But what an unnatural desecration is it, for reason—sovereign, majestic, all-comprehending reason—to contract its boundless range to the measure of what the hand can grasp; to be sunk so low as to idolize outward or sensitive good; to make its god, not indeed of wood or stone, but of a sense or a nerve! What a prostration of immortal reason is it, to bend its whole power to the poor and pitiful uses which sinful indulgence demands of it!

Sin is a kind of insanity. So far as it goes, it makes man an irrational creature: it makes him a fool. The consummation of sin is

ever, and in every form, the extreme of folly. And it is that most pitiable folly, which is puffed up with arrogance and self-sufficiency. Sin degrades, it impoverishes, it beggars the soul; and yet the soul, in this very condition, blesses itself in its superior endowments and happy fortune. Yes, every sinner is a beggar, as truly as the most needy and desperate mendicant. He begs for a precarious happiness; he begs it of his possessions or his coffers that cannot give it; he begs it of every passing trifle and pleasure; he begs it of things most empty and uncertain,—of every vanity, of every shout of praise in the vacant air; of every wandering eye he begs its homage: he wants these things; he wants them for happiness; he wants them to satisfy the craving soul; and yet he imagines that he is very fortunate: he accounts himself wise, or great, or honourable, or rich, increased in goods, and in need of nothing. The infatuation of the inebriate man, who is elated and gay, just when he ought to be most depressed and sad, we very well understand. But it is just as true of every man that is intoxicated by any of his senses or passions, by wealth, or honour, or pleasure, that he is infatuated—that he has abjured reason.

What clearer dictate of reason is there than to prefer the greater good to the lesser good? But every offender, every sensualist, every avaricious man, sacrifices the greater good—the happiness of virtue and piety—for the lesser good, which he finds in his senses or in the perishing world. Nor is this the strongest view of the case. He sacrifices the greater for the less, without any necessity for it. He might have both. He gives up heaven for earth, when, in the best sense, he might, I repeat, have both. A pure mind can derive more enjoyment from this world, and from the senses, than an impure mind. This is true even of the lowest senses. But there are other senses besides these; and the pleasures of the epicure are far from equalling, even in intensity, those which piety draws from the glories of vision and the melodies of sound,—ministers as they are of thoughts and feelings that swell far beyond the measure of all worldly joy.

The love of happiness might properly be treated as a separate part of our nature; and I had intended, indeed, to speak of it distinctly,—to speak of the meagre and miserable provision which unholy gratification makes for it, and yet more of the cruel wrong which is done to this eager and craving love of happiness. But as I have fallen on this topic, and find the space that belongs to me diminishing, I must content myself with a single suggestion.

What bad man ever desired that his *child* should be like himself? Vice is said to wear an alluring aspect, and many a heedless youth, alas! rushes into its embraces for happiness; but what vicious man, what corrupt and dissolute man, ever desired that his child should walk in his steps? And what a testimony is this—what a clear and disinterested testimony, to the unhappiness of a sinful course! Yes, it is the bad man that often feels an interest about the virtue of others, beyond all, perhaps, that good men feel; feels an intensity, an agony of desire for his children, that *they* may be brought up virtuously—that they may never, never be such as he is!

How truly, and with what striking emphasis, did the venerable Cranmer reply, when told that a certain man had cheated him,—"No, he has cheated himself." Every bad man, every dishonest man, every

corrupt man, cheats himself of a good, far dearer than any advantage that he obtains over his neighbour. Others he may injure, abuse, and delude; but another thing is true, though commonly forgotten, and that is, that he deludes himself, abuses himself, injures himself, more than he does all other men.

In the next place, sin does a wrong to conscience. There is a conscience in every man, which is as truly a part of his nature as reason or memory. The offender against this, therefore, violates no unknown law, nor impracticable rule. From the very teaching of his nature he knows what is right, and he knows that he can do it; and his very nature, therefore, instead of furnishing him with apologies for wilful wrong, holds him inexcusable. Inexcusable, I am aware, is a strong word; and when I have looked at mankind, and seen the ways in which they are instructed, educated, and influenced, I have been disposed to feel as if there were palliations. But on the other hand, when I consider how strong is the voice of nature in a man, how sharp and piercing is the work of a restraining and condemning conscience, how loud and terrible is its remonstrance, what a peculiar, what a heaven-commissioned anguish it sometimes inflicts upon the guilty man,—I am compelled to say, despite of all bad teaching and bad influence, "this being is utterly inexcusable;" for, I repeat it, there is a conscience in men. I cannot admit that human nature ever chooses sin as such. It seeks for good, for gratification, indeed. But take the vilest man that lives, and if it were so that he could obtain the gratification he seeks—be it property or sensual pleasure—that he could obtain it honestly and innocently, he would greatly prefer it on such terms. This shows that there is a conscience in him. But he *will* have the desired gratification; and to obtain it, he sets his foot upon that conscience, and crushes it down to dishonour and agony, worse than death. Ah! my brethren, we who sit in our closets talk about vice, and dishonesty, and bloody crime, and draw dark pictures of them,—cold and lifeless, though dark pictures; but we little know, perhaps, of what we speak. The heart, all conscious and alive to the truth, would smile in bitterness and derision at the feebleness of our description. And could the heart speak—could "the bosom black as death" send forth its voice of living agony in our holy places, it would rend the vaulted arches of every sanctuary with the cry of a pierced, and wounded, and wronged, and ruined nature!

Finally, sin does a wrong to the affections. How does it mar even that image of the affections, that mysterious shrine from which their revealings flash forth, "the human face divine;" bereaving the world of more than half its beauty! Can you ever behold sullenness clouding the clear fair brow of childhood,—or the flushed cheek of anger, or the averted and writhen features of envy, or the dim and sunken eye and haggard aspect of vice, or the red signals of bloated excess hung out on every feature, proclaiming the fire that is consuming within,—without feeling that sin is the despoiler of all that the affections make most hallowed and beautiful?

But these are only indications of the wrong that is done, and the ruin that is wrought in the heart. Nature has made our affections to be full of tenderness, to be sensitive and alive to every touch, to cling to their cherished objects with a grasp from which nothing but cruel

violence can sever them. We hear much, I know, of the coldness of the world, but I cannot believe much that I hear; nor is it perhaps meant in any sense that denies to man naturally the most powerful affections—affections that demand the most gentle and considerate treatment. Human love—I am ready to exclaim—how strong is it! What yearnings are there of parental fondness, of filial gratitude, of social kindness everywhere! What impatient asking of ten thousand hearts for the love of others; not for their gold, not for their praise, but for their love!

But sin enters into this world of the affections, and spreads around the death-like coldness of distrust; the word of anger falls like a blow upon the heart, or avarice hardens the heart against every finer feeling; or the insane merriment, or the sullen stupor of the inebriate man falls like a thunderbolt amidst the circle of kindred and children. Oh! the hearts where sin is to do its work should be harder than the nether millstone; yet it enters in among affections, all warm, all sensitive, all gushing forth in tenderness; and, deaf to all their pleadings, it does its work, as if it were some demon of wrath that knew no pity, and heard no groans, and felt no relenting.

But I must not leave this subject to be regarded as if it were only a matter for abstract or curious speculation. It goes beyond reasoning; it goes to the conscience, and demands penitence and humiliation.

For of what, in this view, is the sensualist guilty? He is guilty, not merely of indulging the appetites of his body, but of sacrificing to that body a soul!—I speak literally—of sacrificing to that body a soul! yes, of sacrificing all the transcendent and boundless creation of God in his nature to one single nerve of his perishing frame. The brightest emanation of God, a flame from the everlasting altar burns within him; and he voluntarily spreads over it a fleshy veil—a veil of appetites—a veil of thick darkness; and if from its awful folds one beam of the holy and insufferable light within breaks forth, he closes his eyes, and quickly spreads another covering of wilful delusion over it, and utterly refuses to see that light, though it flashes upon him from the shrine of the Divinity. There is, indeed, a peculiarity in the sensuality of a man, distinguishing it from the sensual gratification of which an animal is capable, and which many men are exalted above the brutes only to turn to the basest uses. The sensual pleasures of a human being derive a quality from the mind. They are probably more intense, through the co-operating action of the mind. The appetite of hunger or thirst, for instance, is doubtless the same in both animal and man, and its gratification the same in *kind;* but the mind communicates to it a greater intensity. To a certain extent this is unquestionably natural and lawful. But the mind, finding that it has this power, and that by absorption in sense, by gloating over its objects, it can for a time add something to their enjoyment,—the mind, I say, surrenders itself to the base and ignoble ministry. The angel in man does homage to the brute in man. Reason toils for sense; the imagination panders for appetite; and even the conscience—that no faculty may be left unde-based—the divine conscience strives to spread around the loathsome forms of voluptuousness a haze of moral beauty—calling intoxication enthusiasm, and revelling good fellowship, and dignifying every species of indulgence with some name that is holy.

Of what, again, is the miser, and of what is every inordinately covetous man, guilty? Conversant as he may be with every species of trade and traffic, there is one kind of barter coming yet nearer to his interest, but of which, perchance, he has never thought. He barters virtue for gain. That is the stupendous moral traffic in which he is engaged. The very attributes of the mind are made a part of the stock in the awful trade of avarice. And if its account-book were to state truly the *whole* of every transaction, it would often stand thus: "Gained, my hundreds or my thousands; lost, the rectitude and peace of my conscience:" "Gained, a great bargain, driven hard; lost, in the same proportion, the generosity and kindness of my affections." "Credit"—and what strife is there for that ultimate item, for that final record?—"Credit, by an immense fortune;" but on the opposing page, the last page of that moral, as truly as mercantile, account, I read these words, written not in golden capitals, but in letters of fire—"a lost soul!"

Oh, my brethren! it is a pitiable desecration of such a nature as ours to give it up to the world. Some baser thing might have been given without regret; but to bow down reason and conscience, to bind them to the clods of earth, to contract those faculties that spread themselves out beyond the world, even to infinity—to contract them to worldly trifles—it is pitiable; it is something to mourn and to weep over. He who sits down in a dungeon which another has made, has not such cause to bewail himself as he who sits down in the dungeon which he has thus made for himself. Poverty and destitution are sad things; but there is no such poverty, there is no such destitution as that of a covetous and worldly heart. Poverty is a sad thing; but there is no man so poor as he who is poor in his affections and virtues. Many a house is full, where the mind is unfurnished and the heart is empty; and no hovel of mere penury ever ought to be so sad as that house. Behold, it is left desolate—to the immortal it is left desolate, as the chambers of death. Death *is* there indeed; and it is the death of the soul!

But not to dwell longer upon particular forms of evil—of what, let us ask, is the *man* guilty? *Who* is it that is thus guilty? To say that he is noble in his nature has been sometimes thought a dangerous laxity of doctrine, a proud assumption of merit, "a flattering unction" laid to the soul. But what kind of flattery is it to say to a man, "you were made but little lower than the angels; you might have been rising to the state of angels, and you have made—*what* have you made yourself? what you *are*—a slave to the world—a slave to sense—a slave to masters baser than nature made them—to vitiated sense, and a corrupt and vain world!" Alas! the irony implied in such flattery as this is not needed to add poignancy to conviction. Boundless capacities shrunk to worse than infantile imbecility! immortal faculties made toilers for the vanities of a moment! a glorious nature sunk to a willing fellowship with evil!—alas! it needs no exaggeration, but only simple statement, to make this a sad and afflicting case. Ill enough had it been for us if we had been *made* a depraved and degraded race; well might the world even then have sat down in sackcloth and sorrow, though repentance could properly have made no part of its sorrow. But ill is it indeed, if we have made *ourselves* the sinful and unhappy

beings that we are; if we have given ourselves the wounds which have brought languishment, and debility, and distress upon us? What keen regret and remorse would any one of us feel, if in a fit of passion he had destroyed his own right arm, or had implanted in it a lingering wound? And yet this, and this last especially, is what every offender does to some faculty of his nature.

But this is not all. Ill enough had it been for us if we had wrought out evil from nothing—if, from a nature negative and indifferent to the result, we had brought forth the fruits of guilt and misery. But if we have wronged, if we have wrested from its true bias, a nature made for heavenly ends; if it was all beautiful in God's design and in our capacity, and we have made it all base, so that human nature, alas! is but the by-word of the satirist, and a mark for the scorner; if affections that might have been sweet and pure almost as the thoughts of angels, have been soured, and embittered, and turned to wrath, even in the homes of human kindness; if the very senses have been brutalized, and degraded, and changed from ministers of pleasure to inflicters of pain; and yet more, if all the dread authority of reason has been denied, and all the sublime sanctity of conscience has been set at naught in this downward course; and yet once more, if all these things—not chimerical, not visionary—are actually witnessed, are matters of history in ten thousand dwellings around us,—ah! if they are actually existing, my brethren, in you and in me;—and, finally, if uniting together, these causes of depravation have spread a flood of misery over the world; and there are sorrows, and sighings, and tears in all the habitations of men, all proceeding from this one cause; then, I say, shall penitence be thought a strange and uncalled-for emotion? Shall it be thought strange that the first great demand of the gospel should be for repentance? Shall it be thought strange that a man should sit down and weep bitterly for his sins—so strange that his acquaintances shall ask, "what hath he done?" or shall conclude that he is going mad with fanaticism, or is on the point of losing his reason? No, truly; the dread infatuation is on the part of those who weep not! It is the negligent world that is fanatical and frantic, in the pursuit of unholy indulgences and unsatisfying pleasures. It is such a world refusing to weep over its sins and miseries that is fatally deranged. Repentance, my brethren! shall it be thought a virtue difficult of exercise? What can the world sorrow for, if not for the cause of all sorrow? What is to awaken grief, if not guilt and shame? Where shall the human heart pour out its tears, if not on those desolations which have been of its own creating?

How fitly is it written, and in language none too strong, that "the sacrifices of God are a broken and contrite heart." And how encouragingly is it written also—"a broken and contrite heart thou wilt not despise." "Oh, Israel!" saith again the sacred word,—"Oh, Israel! thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help found."

ON THE ADAPTATION WHICH RELIGION,

TO BE TRUE AND USEFUL,

SHOULD HAVE TO HUMAN NATURE.

Isaiah xlii. 3: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench."

This was spoken by prophecy of our Saviour, and is commonly considered as one of the many passages which either prefigure or describe the considerate and gracious adaptation of his religion to the wants and weaknesses of human nature. This adaptation of Christianity to the wants of the mind, is, indeed, a topic that has been much and very justly insisted on as an evidence of its truth.

I wish, however, in the present discourse, to place this subject before you in a light somewhat different, perhaps, from that in which it has usually been viewed. If Christianity is suited to the wants of our nature, it is proper to consider what our nature needs. I shall therefore, in the following discourse, give considerable prominence to this inquiry. The wants of our nature are various. I shall undertake to show in several respects what a religion that is adapted to these wants *should be.* In the same connexion I shall undertake to show that Christianity is such a religion.

This course of inquiry, I believe, will elicit some just views of religious truth, and will enable us to judge whether our own views of it are just. My object in it is to present some temperate and comprehensive views of religion, which shall be seen at once to meet the necessities of our nature, and to accord with the spirit of the Christian religion.

Nothing, it would seem, could be more obvious than that a religion for human beings should be suited to human beings; not to angels, nor to demons; not to a fictitious order of creatures; not to the inhabitants of some other world; but to *men*—to men of this world, of this state and situation in which we are placed, of this nature which is given us,—to *men*, with all their passions and affections warm and alive, and all their weaknesses, and wants and fears about them. And yet, evident and reasonable as all this is, nothing has been more common than for religion to fail of this very adaptation. Sometimes it has been made a quality all softness, all mercy and gentleness—something joyous and cheering, light and easy, as if it were designed for angels. At others it has been clothed with features as dark and malignant as if it be-

longed to fiends rather than to men. In no remote period it has laid penances on men, as if their sinews and nerves were like the mails of steel which they wore in those days: while the same religion, with strange inconsistency, lifted up the reins to their passions, as if it had been the age of stoicism, instead of being the age of chivalry. Alas! how little has there been in the religions of past ages—how little in the prevalent forms even of the Christian religion—to draw out, to expand, and brighten the noble faculties of our nature! How many of the beautiful fruits of human affection have withered away under the cold and blighting touch of a scholastic and stern theology! How many fountains of joy in the human heart have been sealed and closed up for ever by the iron hand of a gloomy superstition! How many bright spirits—how many comely and noble natures—have been marred and crushed by the artificial, the crude, and rough dealing of religious frenzy and fanaticism!

It is suitable, then—it is expedient—to consider the adaptation which religion, to be true and useful, ought to have to human nature. It may serve to correct errors. It may serve to guide those who are asking what ideas of religion they are to entertain; what sentiments they are to embrace; what conduct to pursue.

In entering upon this subject, let me offer one leading observation, and afterwards proceed to some particulars.

I. I say, then, in the first place, that religion should be adapted to our *whole* nature. It should remember that we have understandings; and it should be a rational religion. It should remember that we have feelings; and it should be an earnest and fervent religion. It should remember that our feelings revolt at violence, and are all alive to tenderness; and it should be gentle, ready to entreat, and full of mercy. It should remember too that our feelings naturally lean to self-indulgence, and it should be, in its gentleness, strict and solemn. It should, in a due proportion, address all our faculties.

Most of the erroneous forms of religious sentiment that prevail in the Christian world, have arisen from the predominance that has been given to some one part of our nature in the matters of spiritual concernment. Some religions have been all speculation, all doctrine, all theology; and, as you might expect, they have been cold, barren, and dead. Others have been all feeling, and have become visionary, wild, and extravagant. Some have been all sentiment, and have wanted practical virtue. Others have been all practice; their advocates have been exclaiming "works! works! these are the evidence and test of all goodness." And so, with certain exceptions and qualifications, they are. But this substantial character of religion, this hold which it really has upon all the active principles of our nature, has been so much, so exclusively contended for, that religion has too often degenerated into a mere superficial, decent morality.

Religion, then, let it be repeated, if it be true and just, addresses our whole nature. It addresses the active and the contemplative in us—reason and imagination, thought and feeling. It is experience; but it is conduct too: it is high meditation; but then it is also humble virtue. It is excitement, it is earnestness; but no less truly is it calmness. Let me dwell upon this last point a moment. It is not uncommon to hear it said that excitement is a very bad thing, and that true religion

is calm. And yet it would seem as if, by others, repose was regarded as deadly to the soul, and as if the only safety lay in a tremendous agitation. Now what saith our nature—for the being that is the very subject of this varying discipline may surely be allowed to speak—what saith our nature to these different advisers? It says, I think, that both are, to a certain extent, wrong, and both, to a certain extent, right. That is to say, human nature requires, in their due proportion, both excitement and tranquillity. Our minds need a complex and blended influence; need to be at once aroused and chastened, to be at the same time quickened and subdued; need to be impelled, and yet guided; need to be humbled, no doubt, and that deeply, but not that *only*, as it seems to be commonly thought—humbled, I say, and yet supported; need to be bowed down in humility, and yet strengthened in trust; need to be nerved to endurance at one time, and, at another, to be transported with joy. Let religion—let the reasonable and gracious doctrines of Jesus Christ—come to us with these adaptations; generous, to expand our affections; strict, to restrain our passions; plastic, to mould our temper; strong, ay, strong to control our will. Let religion be thus welcomed to every true principle and passion of our nature. Let it touch all the springs of intellectual and of moral life. Let it penetrate to every hidden recess of the soul, and bring forth all its powers, and enlighten, inspire, perfect them.

I hardly need say, that the Christian religion *is* thus adapted to our whole nature. Its evidences address themselves to our sober judgment. Its precepts commend themselves to our consciences. It imparts light to our understandings, and fervour to our affections. It speaks gently to our repentance; but terribly to our disobedience. It really does that for us which religion should do. It does arouse and chasten, quicken and subdue, impel and guide, humble and yet support: it arms us with fortitude, and it transports us with joy. It is profitable for the life that now is, and for that which is to come.

II. But I must pass now, to observe that there are more particular adaptations which religion should have, and which the gospel actually has, to the condition of human nature, and to the various degrees of its improvement.

One of the circumstances of our moral condition is danger. Religion, then, should be a guardian, and a vigilant guardian; and let us be assured that the gospel is such. Such emphatically do we read. If we cannot bear a religion that admonishes us, watches over us, warns us, restrains us, let us be assured that we cannot bear a religion that will save us. Religion should be the keeper of the soul; and without such a keeper, in the slow and undermining process of temptation, or amidst the sudden and strong assaults of passion, it will be overcome and lost.

Again, the human condition is one of weakness. There are weak points where religion should be stationed to support and strengthen us. Points, did I say? Are we not encompassed with weakness? Where, in the whole circle of our spiritual interests and affections, are we not exposed and vulnerable? Where have we not need to set up the barriers of habit, and to build the strongest defences with which resolutions and vows and prayers can surround us? Where, and wherein, I ask again, is any man safe? What virtue of any man is secure from

frailty? What strong purpose of his is not liable to failure? What affection of his heart can say, "I have strength, I am established, and nothing can move me." How weak is man in trouble, in perplexity, in doubt—how weak in affliction, or when sickness bows the spirit, or when approaching death is unloosing all the bands of his pride and self-reliance! And whose spirit does not sometimes faint under its *intrinsic* weakness, under its *native* frailty, and the burden and pressure of its necessities? Religion then should bring supply, and support, and strength to the soul; and the gospel does bring supply, and support, and strength. And it thus meets a universal want. Every mind *wants* the stability which principle gives; wants the comfort which piety gives; wants it continually, in all the varying experience of life.

I have said, also, that religion should be adapted to the various degrees of mental improvement, and I may add, to the diversities of temperament. Now, there are sluggish natures that need to be aroused. All the machinery of spiritual terror can scarce be too much to arouse some persons, though it may indeed be very improperly applied. But on the contrary, there *are* minds so excitable and sensitive, that religion should come to *them* with all its sobering and tranquillizing influence. In how many cases do we witness this! How many are there whose minds are chilled or stupified by denunciation! How many are repelled by severity, or crushed by a weight of fear and anxiety! How many such are there that need a helping hand to be stretched out to them; that need to be raised, and soothed, and comforted; that need to be won with gentleness, and cheered with promises! The gospel has terrors, indeed, but it is not all terror; and its most awful rebukes soften into pity over the fearful, the dejected, the anxious, and humble.

But the most striking circumstance, in the adaptation of religion to the different degrees of mental improvement, is its character, as supplying not merely the general necessities, but the conscious wants of the mind. There may be some who have never been conscious of these intrinsic wants, though they spring from human nature, and must be sooner or later felt. To the very young, or to the unreflecting, religion can be scarcely anything more, perhaps, than direction. It says, "Do this, and do that; and refrain from this gratification, and beware of that danger." It is chiefly a set of rules and precepts to them. Speak to them of religion as the grand resort of the mind,—as that which meets its inward necessities, supplies its deep-felt wants, fills its capacious desires,—and they do not well understand you, or they do not understand why this view of the subject should be so interesting to you. But another mind shall be bound to the gospel by nothing so much as by its wants. It craves something thus vast, glorious, infinite, and eternal. It sought—sought long, perhaps, and anxiously—for something thus satisfying; and it has found what it long and painfully sought, in the teachings of Jesus—in the love of God—in that world of spiritual thoughts and objects which the great teacher has opened—in that solemn and majestic vision of immortality which he has brought to light. To such a religion the soul clings with a peace and satisfaction never to be expressed—never to be uttered. It says, "To whom shall I go—to whom shall I go? thou, O blessed religion, minister and messenger from heaven!—thou hast the words of eternal life, of eternal joy!" The language which proclaims the sufficiency of

religion, which sets forth the attraction and the greatness of it, as supplying the great intellectual want, is no chimerical language; it is not merely a familiar language; but it is *intimate* with the deepest and the dearest feelings of the heart.

In descending to the more specific applications of the principle of religion to human nature, I must content myself, for the present, with one further observation; and that is, that it meets and mingles with all the varieties of natural temperament and disposition.

Religion should not propose to break up all the diversities of individual character; and Christianity does not propose this. It did not propose this even when it first broke upon the world with manifestation and miracle. It allowed the rash and forward Peter, the timid and doubting Thomas, the mild and affectionate John, the resolute and fervent Paul, still to retain all their peculiarities of character. The way of *becoming* religious, or interested in religion, was not the same to all. There was Cornelius, the Pagan, whose "alms and prayers were accepted;" and there were others who became Christians without "so much as hearing that there was any Holy Ghost." There were the immediate disciples of our Lord, who, through a course of gradual teaching, came to apprehend his spiritual kingdom; and there was Paul, to whom this knowledge came by miracle, and with a light brighter than the sun. There was the terrified jailer who fell down trembling and said, "what must I do to be saved?" and there was the cautious and inquiring Nicodemus, who, as if he had been reflecting on the matter, said, "we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

Now it is painful to observe, at this day, how little of this individuality there is in the prevailing and popular experience of religion. A certain process is pointed out, a certain result is described; particular views and feelings are insisted on as the only right and true state of mind, and every man strives to bring himself through the required process to the given result. It is common, indeed, to observe, that if you read one account of a conversion, one account of a religious excitement, you have all. I charge not this to any particular set of opinions, though it may be found to have been connected with some creeds more than with others; but it results too from the very weakness of human nature. One man leans on the experience of another, and it contributes to his satisfaction, of course, to have the same experience. How refreshing is it, amidst this dull and artificial uniformity, to meet with a man whose religion is his own; who has thought and felt for himself; who has not propped up his hopes on other men's opinions; who has been willing to commune with the spirit of religion and of God alone; and who brings forth to you the fruits of his experience, fresh and original, and is not much concerned for *your* judgment of them, provided they have nourished and comforted *himself*. I would not desire that every man should view all the matters of piety as I do, but would rather that every man should bring the results of his own individual conviction to aid the common cause of right knowledge and judgment.

In the diversities of character and situation that exist, there will naturally be diversities of religious experience. Some, as I have said before, are constitutionally lively, and others serious; some are ardent,

and others moderate; some, also, are inclined to be social, and others to be retired. Knowledge and ignorance, too, and refinement and rudeness of character, are cases to be provided for. And a true and thorough religion—this is the special observation I wish to make on the diversities of character—a true and thorough religion, when it enters the mind, will show itself by its naturally blending and mingling with the mind *as it is;* it will sit easily upon the character; it will take forms in accordance, not with the bad, but with the constitutional tempers and dispositions it finds in its subjects.

Nay, I will say yet further, that religion ought not to repress the natural buoyancy of our affections, the innocent gaiety of the heart. True religion was not designed to do this. Undoubtedly it will discriminate. It will check what is extravagant in us, all tumultuous and excessive joy about acquisitions of little consequence, or of doubtful utility to us; it will correct what is deformed; it will uproot what is hurtful. But there is a native buoyancy of the heart, the meed of youth, or of health, which is a sensation of our animal nature, a tendency of our being. This, true religion does not propose to withstand. It does not war against our nature. As well should the cultivator of a beautiful and variegated garden cut up all the flowers in it, or lay weights and encumbrances on them, lest they should be too flourishing and fair. Religion is designed for the *culture* of our natural faculties, not for their eradication!

It would be easy now, did the time permit, to illustrate the views which have been presented, by a reference to the teachings of our Saviour. He did not address one passion or part of our nature alone, or chiefly. There was no one manner of address; and we feel sure as we read, that there was no one tone. He did not confine himself to any one class of subjects. He was not always speaking of death, nor of judgment, nor of eternity; frequently and solemnly as he spoke of them. He was not always speaking of the state of the sinner, nor of repentance and the new heart; though on these subjects too he delivered his solemn message. There was a varied adaptation, in his discourses, to every condition of mind, and every duty of life, and every situation in which his hearers were placed. Neither did the preaching of our Saviour possess, exclusively, any one moral complexion. It was not terror only, nor promise only; it was not, exclusively, severity nor gentleness; but it was each one of them in its place, and all of them always subdued to the tone of perfect sobriety. At one time we hear him saying, with lofty self-respect, "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things:"—at another, with all the majesty of the Son of God, we hear him, in reply to the fatal question of the judgment-hall, "Art thou the Christ?"—we hear him say, "I am; and hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man seated on the throne of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." But it is the same voice that says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest: take my yoke, which is easy, and my burden, which is light, and ye shall find rest to your souls." At one time he speaks in the language of terror, and says, "Fear not them who, after that they have killed the body, have no more that they can do; but fear Him who is able to cast both soul and body into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." But at another time the awful admonisher breaks out into the pathetic excla-

mation, "Oh! Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered your children, even as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, but ye would not."

If I might be permitted now, to add a suggestion of an advisory nature, it would be in the language of an apostle—"let your *moderation* be known to all men." The true religion, the true excellence of character, requires that we should hold all the principles and affections of our nature in a due subordination and proportion to each other; that we should subdue all the clamoring voices of passion and desire, of fear and hope, of joy and sorrow, to complete harmony; that we should regard and cultivate our nature *as a whole.* Almost all error is some truth carried to excess, or diminished from its proper magnitude. Almost all sin is some good or useful principle, suffered to be immoderate and ungovernable, or suppresssd and denied its proper influence and action. Let, then, moderation be a leading trait of our virtue and piety. This is not dulness. Nothing is farther from dulness. And nothing, surely, is more beautiful in character, or more touching, than to see a lively and intense sensibility controlled by the judgment; strong passions subdued and softened by reflection: and, on the other hand, to find a vigorous, clear, and manly understanding, quickened by a genuine fervor and enthusiasm. Nothing is more wise or more admirable in *action* than to be resolute and yet calm, earnest and yet self-possessed, decided and yet modest; to contend for truth and right with meekness and charity; to go forward in a good cause, without pretension, to retire with dignity; to give without pride, and to withhold without meanness; to rejoice with moderation, and to suffer with patience. And nothing, I may add, was more remarkable in the character of our Saviour than this perfect sobriety, consistency, self-control.

This, therefore, is the perfection of character. This will always be found, I believe, to be a late stage in the progress of religious worth from its first beginnings. It is comparatively easy to be one thing and that alone; to be all zeal, or all reasoning; all faith, or all action; all rapture, or all chilling and captious fault-finding. Here novices begin. Thus far they may easily go. Thus far men may go, whose character is the result of temperament, and not of culture; of headlong propensity, and not of careful and conscientious discipline. It is easy for the bruised reed to be broken. It is easy for the smoking flax to be quenched. It is easy to deal rashly and rudely with the matters of religious and virtuous experience—to make a hasty effort, to have a paroxysm of emotion, to give way to a feverish and transient feeling, and then to smother and quench all the rising purposes of a better life. But true religion comes to us with a wiser and more considerate adaptation,—to sustain and strengthen the bruised reed of human weakness; to fan the rising flame of virtuous and holy purposes: it comes to revive our failing courage, to restrain our wayward passions. It will not suffer us to go on with our fluctuations and our fancies; with our transient excitements and momentary struggles. It will exert a more abiding, a more rational influence. It will make us more faithful and persevering. It will lay its hand on the very energies of our nature, and will take the lead, and control the forming and perfecting of them. May we find its real and gracious power! May it lead us in the true,

the firm, the brightening path of the just, till it brings us to the perfect day.

Oh! my brethren, we sin against our own peace, we have no mercy upon ourselves, when we neglect such a religion as this. It is the only wisdom, the only soundness, the only consistency and harmony of character, the only peace and blessedness of mind. We should not have our distressing doubts and fears, we should not be so subject as we are to the distracting influences of passion or of the world without us, if we had yielded our hearts wholly to the spirit and religion of Jesus. It is a religion adapted to us all. To every affection, to every state of mind, troubled or joyous, to every period of life, it would impart the very influence that we need. How surely would it guide our youth, and how would it temper, and soften, and sanctify all the fervours of youthful affection! How well would it support our age, making it youthful again with the fervent hope of immortality! How would it lead us, too, in all the paths of earthly care, and business, and labour, turning the brief and weary courses of worldly toil into the ways that are everlasting! How faithfully and how calmly would it conduct us to the everlasting abodes! And how well, in fine, does he, of whom it was prophesied that he should not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax—how well does he meet that gracious character, when he says—shall we not listen to him?—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest: take my yoke, which is easy, and my burden, which is light: learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

THE APPEAL OF RELIGION

TO HUMAN NATURE.

PROVERBS viii. 4: "Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men."

THE appeal of religion to human nature, the deep wisdom of its instructions to the human heart, the language of power and of cheering, with which it is fitted to address the inmost soul of man, is never to be understood, perhaps, till our nature is exalted far beyond its present measure. When the voice of wisdom and purity shall find an inward wisdom and purity to which it can speak, it will be received with a welcome and gladness, with a joy beyond all other joy, such as no tongue of eloquence has ever expressed, nor the heart of worldly sensibility ever yet conceived. It is, therefore, with the most unfeigned diffidence, with the most distinct consciousness that my present labour must be incipient and imperfect, that I enter upon this great theme—the appeal of religion to human nature.

What ought it to be? What has it been? These are the inquiries which I shall pursue. Nor shall I attempt to keep them altogether separate in the discussion; since both the defects and the duties of religious instruction may often be best exhibited under the same head of discourse. Neither shall I labour to speak of religion under that abstract and figurative character with which wisdom is personified in the context, though that may be occasionally convenient: but whether it be the language of individual reason or conscience; whether it be the voice of the parent or of the preacher; whether it be the language of forms or of institutions, I would consider how religion has appealed, and how it ought to have appealed, to human nature.

The topics of discourse under which I shall pursue these inquiries, are the following:—In *what character* should religion address us?—to *what* in us should it speak?—and *how* should it deliver its message? That is to say—the substance, the subject, and the spirit of the appeal, are the topics of our inquiry. I cannot, of course, pursue these inquiries beyond the point to which the immediate object of my discourse will carry them; and I am willing to designate that point at once, by saying that the questions are, whether the character in which religion is to appeal to us be moral or not; whether that in us to which it chiefly appeals should be the noblest or the basest part of our nature; and finally, whether the manner and spirit of its appeal should be that of confidence or distrust, of friendship or hatred.

I. And with regard to the first question, the answer, of course, is, that the character in which religion should address us is purely moral.

As a moral principle, as a principle of rectitude, it must speak to us. Institutions, rites, commands, threatenings, promises—all forms of appeal must contain this essence; they must be moral; they must be holy.

It may be thought strange that I should insist upon a point so obvious, but let me crave your patience. What is the centre, the first principle, the essence of all that is moral, of all that is holy? I answer, it is goodness. This is the primary element of all virtue. Excellence, rectitude, righteousness, every virtue, every grace, is but a modification of the one essential, all-embracing principle of love. This is strictly, metaphysically true: it is the result of the most severe philosophical analysis. It is also the truth of Scripture. The character of supreme perfection is summed up in this one attribute, "God is love." This is the very glory of God. For when an ancient servant desired to "see his glory," the answer to the prayer was, that "he caused all his goodness to pass before him."

The character, then, in which religion should appeal to human nature, is that of *simple* and *essential goodness*. This, the moral nature of man is made to understand and to feel; and nothing else but this. This character, doubtless, has various expressions. Sometimes it takes the forms of command and threatening; but still these must speak in the name of goodness. If command and threatening stand up to speak for themselves—alone—dissociated from that love which gives them all their moral character—then, I say that the moral nature of man cannot receive their message. A brute can receive that; a dog or a horse can yield to mere command or menace. But the moral nature can yield to nothing which is not moral; and that which gives morality to every precept and warning, is the goodness which is breathed into them. Divest them of this, and they are not even religious. Nor are those persons religious who pay obedience to command, as command, and without any consideration of its moral nature, of the intrinsic and essential sanction which goodness bestows on the command.

The voice of religion, then, must be as the voice of goodness. Conceive of everything good and lovely, of everything morally excellent and admirable, of everything glorious and godlike, and when these speak to you, know that religion speaks to you. Whether that voice comes from the page of genius, or from the record of heroic and heavenly virtue, or from its living presence and example, or from the bosom of silent reverie, the innermost sanctuary of meditation—whatever of holy and beautiful speaks to you, and through what medium soever it comes, it is the voice of religion. All excellence, in other words, is religion.

But here we meet with what seems to me—and so must I denominate it, in justice to my own apprehensions—a stupendous error; an error, prevalent, I believe, and yet fatal, so far as it goes, to all religious emotion. All excellence, I said, is religion. But the great error is, that in the popular apprehension these things are not identified. In other words, religion and goodness are not identified in the general mind: they are not held by most men to be the same thing. This error, I say, if it exist, is fatal to genuine religious emotion, because men cannot heartily love, as a moral quality, anything which is not, to them, goodness. Or to state this position as a simple truism, they cannot love anything which is not, to them, loveliness.

Now I am willing, nay, I earnestly wish, that with regard to the real nature of religion there should be the utmost discrimination; and I will soon speak to that point. But, I say, for the present—I say, again, that religion is made, intrinsically and altogether, a different thing from what is commonly regarded as loveliness of character, and therefore that it speaks to men, speaks to human nature, not as goodness, but as some other thing.

For proof of this, I ask you, first, to look at that phraseology by which religion is commonly described, and to compare it with the language by which men express those lovely qualities that they most admire. See, then, how they express their admiration. You hear them speak of one who is amiable, lovely, fascinating; of one who is honourable, upright, generous. You hear them speak of a good parent, of an affectionate child, of a worthy citizen, of an obliging neighbour, of a kind and faithful friend, of a man whom they emphatically call "a noble man;" and you observe a fervour of language and a glow of pleasure while these things are said; a kindling animation in the tone and the countenance, which inspires you with a kindred sympathy and delight. But mark, now, with how different a language and manner the qualities of religion are described. The votary of religion is said to be very "serious," perhaps, but with a look and tone as if a much worse thing were stated; or you hear it said of him that he is a "pious man," or, he is "a very experienced person," or, he is "a Christian if ever there was one:" but it seems, even when the religious themselves say all this, as if it were an extorted and cold homage; as if religion were something very proper, indeed, very safe, perhaps, but not very agreeable, certainly; there is no glow, there is no animation, and there is generally no sympathy.

In further proof that religion is not indentified with the beautiful and admirable in character, I might turn from the language in common use to actual experience. *Is* religion, I ask—not the religion of poetry, but that which exists in the actual conceptions of men, the religion of professors, the religion that is commonly taught from our pulpits—is it usually regarded as the loveliest attribute of the human character? When your minds glow with the love of excellence, when you weep over the examples of goodness, is this excellence, is this goodness which you admire, religion? Consult the books of fiction, open the pages of history, resort to the stores of our classical literature, and say, if the religious man of our times appears in them at all; or if, when he does appear in them, it is he that chiefly draws your affection? Say, rather, if it is not some personage, whether of a real or fictitious tale, that is destitute of every distinctive quality of the popular religion, who kindles your enthusiasm? So true is this, that many who have held the prevailing ideas of religion, have regarded, and on their principles have justly regarded, the literature of taste and of fiction, as one of the most insidious temptations that could befall them. No, I repeat, the images of loveliness that dwell in the general mind, whether of writers or readers, have not been the images of religion. And thus it has happened, that the men of taste, and of a lively and ardent sensibility, have by no means yielded their proportion of votaries to religion. The dull, the gloomy, the sick, the aged, have been religious; not—*i. e.* not to the same extent—the young and the joyous in their first admiration

and their first love; not the intellectual and refined in the enthusiasm of their feelings, and in the glory of their imaginations.

But let me appeal once more to experience. I ask, then—do you love religion? I ask you, I ask any one who will entertain the question—do you love religion? Does the very word carry a sound that is agreeable, delightful to you? Does it stand for something attractive and lovely? Are the terms that describe religion—grace, holiness, repentance, faith, godliness—are they invested with a charm to your heart, to your imagination, to your whole mind? Now, to this question I am sure that many would answer freely and decidedly, "No, religion is not a thing that we love. We cannot say that we take that sort of interest in it. We do not profess to be religious, and—honestly—we do not wish to be." What! I might answer in return—do you love nothing that is good? Is there nothing in character, nothing in attribute, no abstract charm, that you love? "Far otherwise," would be the reply. "There are many persons that we love: there are many characters in history, in biography, in romance, that are delightful to us; they are so noble, so beautiful."

How different then, do we not see, are the ideas of religion from the images of loveliness that dwell in many minds! They are actually the *same* in principle. All excellence has the same foundation. There are not, and cannot be, two different and opposite kinds of rectitude. The moral nature of man, deranged though it be, is not deranged so far as to admit this; and yet how evident is it, that religion is not identified with the excellence that men love!

But I hear it said, "The images of loveliness which dwell in the general mind are *not* indeed the images of religion, and ought not to be; for they are false, and would utterly mislead us." Grant, now, for the sake of argument, that this were true, and whom would the admission benefit? What would follow from the admission? Why, this clearly; that of being religious, no power or possibility is within human reach. For men must love that which seems to them to be lovely. If that which seems to them to be lovely is not religion—if religion is something else, and something altogether different,—religion, it is clear, they cannot love: that is to say, on this hypothesis, they cannot be religious; they cannot, by any possibility, but that in which all things are possible with God; they cannot by any possibility that comes within the range of the powers and affections that God has given them.

But it is not true that men's prevailing and constitutional perceptions of moral beauty are false. It is not true, that is to say, that their sense of right and wrong is false; that their conscience is a treacherous and deceitful guide. It is not true; and yet, doubtless, there is a discrimination to be made. Their perceptions may be, and undoubtedly often are, low and inadequate, and marred with error. And therefore when we use the words, excellent, admirable, lovely, there is danger that, to many, they will not mean all that they ought to mean, that men's ideas of these qualities will not be as deep, and thorough, and strict, as they ought to be; while, if we confine ourselves to such terms for religious qualities as serious, holy, godly, the danger is that they will be just as erroneous, besides being technical, barren, and uninteresting.

There is a difficulty, on this account, attending the language of the pulpit, which every reflecting man, in the use of it, must have felt. But the truth, amidst all these discriminations, I hold to be this; that the universal and constitutional perceptions of moral loveliness which mankind entertain, are *radically* just. And therefore the only right doctrine and the only rational direction to be addressed to men on this subject is to the following effect:—"Whatever your conscience dictates; whatever your mind clothes with moral beauty; that to you is right; be that to you religion. Nothing else can be, if you think rationally; and therefore let that be to you the religion that you love; and let it be your endeavour continually to elevate and purify your conceptions of all virtue and goodness." Nay, if I knew a man whose ideas of excellence were ever so low, I should still say to him, Revere those ideas; they are all that you can revere. The very apprehensions you entertain of the glory of God cannot go beyond your ideas of excellence. All that you can worship, then, is the most perfect excellence you can conceive of. Be that, therefore, the object of your reverence. However low, however imperfect it is, still be that to you the image of the Divinity. On that scale of your actual ideas, however humble, let your thoughts rise to higher and higher perfection.

I say, however low. And grant now that the moral conceptions of a man are very low; yet if they are the highest he has, is there anything higher that he can follow? Will it be said there are the Scriptures? But the aid of the Scriptures is already presupposed in the case. They *contribute* to form the very perceptions in question. They are a light to man only as they kindle a light within him. They do not, and they cannot, mean more to any man than he understands, than he perceives them to mean. His perceptions of their intent, then, he must follow. He cannot follow the light any farther than he sees it.

But it may be said that many of the ignorant and debased see very little light; that their perceptions are *very* low; that they admire qualities and actions of a very questionable character. What then? You must begin with them where they are? But let us not grant too much of this. Go to the most degraded being you know, and tell him some story of noble disinterestedness, or touching charity; tell him the story of Howard, or Swartz, or Oberlin; and will he not approve—will he not admire? Then tell him, I say—as the summing up of this head of my discourse—tell him that this is religion. Tell him that this is a faint shadow to the infinite brightness of Divine love—a feeble and marred image compared with the infinite benignity and goodness of God.

II. My next observation is, on the principles to be addressed. And, on this point, I say in general, that religion should appeal to the good in man, against the bad. That there *is* good in man—not fixed goodness—but that there is something good in man, is evident from the fact that he has an idea of goodness. For if the matter be strictly and philosophically traced, it will be found that the idea of goodness can spring from nothing else but experience—from the inward sense of it.

But not to dwell on this: my principal object under this head of discourse is to maintain, that religion should appeal *chiefly*, not to the lowest, but to the highest of our moral sentiments.

There are sentiments in our nature to which powerful appeal can be

made, and they are, emphatically, its high and honourable sentiments. If you wished to speak in tones that should thrill through the very heart of the world, you would speak to these before all others. Almost all the richest poetry, the most admirable of the fine arts, the most popular and powerful eloquence in the world, have addressed these moral and generous sentiments of human nature. And I have observed it as quite remarkable, indeed—because it is an exception to the general language of the pulpit—that all the most eloquent preachers have made great use of these very sentiments; they have appealed to the sense of beauty, to generosity and tenderness, to the natural conscience, the natural sense of right and wrong, of honour and shame.

To these, then, if you would move the human heart, you would apply yourself. You would appeal to the indignation at wrong, at oppression, or treachery, or meanness, or to the natural admiration which men feel for virtuous and noble deeds. If you would touch the most tender feelings of the human heart, you would still make your appeal to these sentiments. You would represent innocence borne down and crushed by the arm of power; you would describe patriotism labouring and dying for its country. Or you would describe a parent's love with all its cares and anxieties, and its self-sacrificing devotion. Or you would pourtray filial affection watching over infirmity, and relieving pain, and striving to pay back something of the mighty debt of filial gratitude. Look abroad in the world, or look back upon the history of ages past, and ask for those on whom the enthusiasm, and pride, and affection of men love to dwell. Evoke from the shadows of the times gone by, their mighty, their cherished forms, around which the halo of everlasting admiration dwells: and what are they? Behold the names of the generous, the philanthropic, and the good—behold the voice of martyred blood on the altars of cruelty, or on the hills of freedom, for ever rising from the earth—eternal testimonies to the right and noble sentiments of mankind.

To these, then, religion ought to have appealed. In these sentiments it ought to have laid its foundation, and on these it ought to have built up its power. But has it done so? *Could* it do so while it held human nature to be utterly depraved?

But there is a farther question. *Can any* religion, Christian or heathen, in fact, entirely discard human nature? Certainly not. Must not every religion that speaks to man, speak to *something* human? Undoubtedly it must. What, then, is the end of all this zeal against human nature? Has it not been, I ask, to address the worst parts of it? There has been no scruple about appealing to fear and anxiety; but of the sentiments of admiration, of the sense of beauty in the human heart, of the deep love for friends and kindred that lingers there, religion has been afraid. Grant, indeed, that these sentiments and affections have been too low: it was the very business of religion to elevate them. But while it has failed to do this, in the degree it ought, how often has it spread a rack of torture for our fear and solicitude! How often has it been an engine of superstition, an inflicter of penance, a minister of despondency and gloom; an instrument effective, as if it were framed on purpose, to keep down all natural buoyancy, generosity, and liberal aspiration! How often has religion frowned upon the nature that it came to save; and instead of winning its con-

fidence and love, has incurred its hatred and scorn; and instead of having drawn it into the blessed path of peace and trust, has driven it to indifference, infidelity, or desperation!

And how lamentable is it! Here is a world of beings filled with enthusiasm, filled with a thousand warm and kindling affections: the breasts of millions are fired with admiration for generous and heroic virtues—and when the living representative of these virtues appears among us—a Washington, or some illustrious compeer in excellence—crowded cities go forth to meet him, and nations lift up the voice of gratitude. How remarkable in the human character is this moral admiration. What quickening thoughts does it awaken in solitude! What tears does it call forth when we think of the prisons, the hospitals, the desolate dwellings, visited and cheered by the humane and merciful! With what ecstasy does it swell the human breast, when the vision of the patriotic, the patiently suffering, the magnanimous and the good, passes before us. In all this, the inferior race has no share. They can fear; but esteem, veneration, the sense of moral loveliness, they know not. These are the prerogatives of man—the gifts of Nature to him—the gifts of God. But how little, alas! have they been called into the service of his religion! How little have their energies been enlisted in that which is the great concern of man!

And all this is the more to be lamented, because those who are most susceptible of feeling and of enthusiasm, most need the power and support of religion. The dull, the earthly, the children of sense, the mere plodders of business, the mere votaries of gain, may do, or may think they can do, without it. But how many beings are there, how many spirits of a finer mould, and of a loftier bearing, and of more intellectual wants, who, when the novelty of life is worn off, when the enthusiasm of youth has been freely lavished, when changes come on, when friends die, and there is care and weariness and solitude to press upon the heart—how many are there, then, that sigh bitterly after some better thing, after something greater, and more permanent, and more satisfying. And how do they need to be told that religion is that better thing, that it is not a stranger to their wants and sorrows; that its voice is speaking and pleading within them, in the cry of their lamentation, and in the felt burthen of their necessity; that religion is the home of their far-wandering desires, the rest, the heaven, of their long-troubled affections! How do they need to hear the voice that says, "Unto ye, O men—men of care, and fear, and importunate desire—do I call; and my voice is to the sons of men—to the children of frailty, and trouble, and sorrow!"

III. Let us now proceed to consider, in the third place, and finally, from the relation between the power that speaks and the principle addressed, in what manner the one should appeal to the other.

The relation, then, between them, I say, is a relation of amity. But let me explain. I do not say, of course, that there is amity between right and wrong. I do not say that there is amity between pure goodness and what is evil in man. But that which is wrong and evil in man is the perversion of something that is good and right. To that good and right I contend that religion should speak: to that it must speak, for there is nothing else that can hear it. We do not appeal to abstractions of evil in man, because there are no such things in him;

but we appeal to affections; to affections in which there is a mixture of good and evil. To the good, then, I say, we must appeal, *against* the evil. And every preacher of righteousness may boldly and fearlessly approach the human heart, in the confidence that, however it may defend itself against him, however high it may build its battlements of habit and its towers of pride, he has friends in the very citadel.

I say, then, that religion should address the true moral nature of man as its friend, and not as its enemy; as its lawful subject and not as an alien or a traitor; and should address it, therefore, with generous and hopeful confidence, and not with cold and repulsive distrust. What *is* it in this nature, to which religion speaks? To reason, to conscience, to the love of happiness, to the sense of the infinite and the beautiful, to aspirations after immortal good; to natural sensibility, also, to the love of kindred and country and home. All these are in this nature, and they are all fitted to render obedience to religion. In this obedience they are satisfied, and indeed they can never be satisfied without it.

Admit, now, that these powers are ever so sadly perverted and corrupted, still no one maintains that they are destroyed. Neither is their testimony to what is right ever, in any case, utterly silenced. Should they not then be appealed to in a tone of confidence? Suppose, for instance, to illustrate our observation, that simple reason were appealed to on any subject *not* religious; and suppose, to make the case parallel, that the reason of the man, on that subject were very much perverted, that he was very much prejudiced and misled. Yet would not the argument be directed to his reason, as a principle actually existing in him, and as a principle to be confided in and to be recovered from its error? Would not every tone of the argument and of the expostulation show confidence in the principle addressed?

Oh! what power might religion have had if it had breathed this tone of confidence; if it had gone down into the deep and silent places of the heart as the voice of friendship; if it had known what dear and precious treasures of love and hope and joy are there, ready to be made celestial by its touch; if it had spoken to man as the most affectionate parent would speak to his most beloved though sadly erring child; if it had said, in the emphatic language of the text, "Unto you, O *men*, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men: lo! I have set my love upon you—upon you, men of the strong and affectionate nature, of the aspiring and heaven-needing soul—not upon inferior creatures, not upon the beasts of the field, but upon you have I set my love. Give entrance to me, not with fear and mistrust, but with good hope and with gladness; give entrance to me, and I will make my abode with you, and I will build up all that is within you, in glory, and beauty, and ineffable brightness." Alas! for our erring and sinful, but also misguided and ill-used nature. Bad enough, indeed, we have made it, or suffered it to be made: but if a better lot had befallen it, if kindlier influences had breathed upon it, if the parent's and the preacher's voice, inspired with every tone of hallowed feeling, had won it to piety, if the train of social life, with every attractive charm of goodness, had led it in the consecrated way; we had ere this—known what now, alas! we so poorly know—we had known what it is to be children of God and heirs of heaven.

My friends, let religion speak to us in its own true character, with

all its mighty power, and winning candour and tenderness. It is the principle of infinite wisdom that speaks. From that unknown period before the world was created—so saith the holy record—from the depth of eternity, from the centre of infinity, from the heart of the universe, from "the bosom of God," its voice has come forth, and spoken to us—to us, men, in our lowly habitations. What a ministration is it! It is the infinite communing with the finite; it is might communing with frailty; it is mercy stretching out its arms to the guilty; it is goodness taking part with all that is good in us against all that is evil. So full, so overflowing, so all-pervading is it, that all things give it utterance. It speaks to us in everything lowly, and in everything lofty. It speaks to us in every whispered accent of human affection, and in every revelation that is sounded out from the spreading heavens. It speaks to us from this lowly seat at which we bow down in prayer, from this humble shrine veiled with the shadows of mortal infirmity, and it speaks to us alike from those altar-fires that blaze in the heights of the firmament. It speaks where the seven thunders utter their voices: and it sends forth its voice—of pity more than human, of agony more than mortal—from the silent summit of Calvary.

Can a principle so sublime and so benignant as religion speak to us but for our good? Can infinity, can omnipotence, can boundless love speak to us but in the spirit of infinite generosity, and candour, and tenderness? No; it may be the infirmity of man to use a harsh tone, and to heap upon us bitter and cruel upbraidings; but so speaks not religion. It says—and I trace an accent of tenderness and entreaty in every word—"Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice—my voice is to the children of men."

O man, whosoever thou art, hear that voice of wisdom. Hear it, thou sacred conscience, and give not way to evil; touch no bribe, touch not dishonest gain, touch not the sparkling cup of unlawful pleasure. Hear it, ye better affections, dear and holy, and turn not your purity to pollution, and your sweetness to bitterness, and your hope to shame. Hear it, poor, wearied, broken, prostrate human nature! and rise to penitence, to sanctity, to glory, to heaven. Rise now, lest soon it be for ever too late. Rise at this entreaty of wisdom, for wisdom can utter no more. Rise,—arise at this voice—for the universe is exhausted of all its revelations—infinity, omnipotence, boundless love have lavished their uttermost resource in this one provision, this one call, this one gospel of mercy!

SPIRITUAL INTERESTS, REAL AND SUPREME.

JOHN vi. 26, 27: "Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto eternal life."

THE contrast here set forth is between a worldly mind and a spiritual mind: and so very marked and striking is it, that the fact upon which it is based may seem to be altogether extraordinary—a solitary instance of Jewish stupidity, and not applicable to any other people, or any after-times. Our Saviour avers, that the multitude who followed him on a certain occasion did so, not because they saw those astonishing miracles that gave witness to his spiritual mission, but simply because they did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Yet, strange as it may seem, the same great moral error I believe still exists; the same preference of sensual to spiritual good, though the specific exemplification of the principle can no longer be exhibited among men. But let us attend to our Saviour's exhortation. "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto eternal life." The word *labour* refers to the business of life. It is as if our Saviour had said, Work, toil, care, provide for the soul. And it is in this sense of the word, as well as in the whole tenour of the passage, that I find the leading object of my present discourse; which is to show that spiritual interests, the interests of the mind and heart, the interests of reason and conscience, however neglected, however forgotten amidst the pursuit of sensual and worldly objects, are nevertheless real and supreme; that they are not visionary because spiritual, but that they are most substantial and weighty interests, and most truly deserving of that earnest attention, that laborious exertion, which is usually given to worldly interests.

So does not the world regard them, any more than did the Jews of old. It is written, that the "children of this world are wiser in their generation," *i. e.* after their manner wiser, "than the children of light." But the children of this world, not content with this concession, are apt to think that they are every way wiser. And the special ground of this assumption, though they may not be aware of it, is, I believe, the notion which they entertain that *they* are dealing with real and substantial interests. Religious men, they conceive, are occupied with matters which are vague and visionary, and which scarcely have any real existence. A great property is something fixed and tangible, sure and substantial. But a certain view of religion, a certain state of mind, is a thing of shadow—an abstraction vanishing into nothing. The worldly wise man admits that it may be well enough for some people; at any rate he will not quarrel with it; he does not think it

worth his troubling himself about it; his aim, his plan, his course is a different one, and—the implication is—a wiser one.

Yes, the very wisdom implied in religion is frequently accounted to be wisdom of but an humble order; the wisdom of dulness or of superstitious fancy or fear; or, at most, a very scholastic, abstract, useless wisdom. And the very homage which is usually paid to religion, the hackneyed acknowledgment that it is very well, very proper, a very good thing; or the more solemn, if not more dull confession of "the great importance of religion;" and more especially the demure and mechanical manner in which these things are said, proclaim, as plainly as anything can, that it has not yet become a living interest in the hearts of men. It has never, in fact, taken its proper place among human concerns. I am afraid it must be said that with most men, the epithet most naturally attaching itself to religion, to religious services, to prayers, to books of sermons, is the epithet *dull*. And it is well known, as a fact very illustrative of this state of mind, that for a long time, parents in this country were wont to single out and destine for the ministry of religion the dullest of their sons.

I know of nothing more important, therefore, than to show that religion takes its place among objects that are of actual concern to men and to all men; that its interests are not only of the most momentous, but of the most practical character; that the wisdom that winneth souls, the religion that takes care for them, is the most useful, the most reasonable of all wisdom and discipline. It is of *the care of the soul*, then, that I would speak; of its wisdom, of its reasonableness, of its actual interest to the common sense and welfare of men.

The ministry of the gospel is often denominated the care of souls; and I consider this language, rightly explained, as conveying a very comprehensive and interesting description of the office. It is the care of souls. This is its whole design, and ought to be its whole direction, impulse, strength, and consolation. And this, too, if it were justly felt, would impart an interest, an expansion, a steady energy, a constant growth, and a final and full enlargement to the mind of the Christian teacher, not surpassed, certainly, in any other profession or pursuit in life. Whether the sacred office has had this effect to as great an extent as other professions, is, to the clergy at least, a very serious question. I am obliged to doubt whether it has. Certainly, to say that its spirit has been characterized by as much natural warmth and hearty earnestness as that of other pursuits; that its eloquence has been as free and powerful as that of the senate and the bar; that its literature has been as rich as that of poetry or even of fiction,—this is more than I dare aver.

But not to dwell on this question: it is to my present purpose to observe, that the very point from which this want of a vivid perception of religious objects has arisen, is the very point from which help must come. Men have not perceived the interests of the mind and heart to be the realities that they are. Here is the evil, and here we must find the remedy. Let the moral states, experiences, feelings of the soul, become but as interesting as the issue of a lawsuit, the success of business, or the result of any worldly enterprise, and there would be no difficulty; there would be no complaint of dulness, either from our own bosoms or from the lips of others.

Strip off from the inward soul those many folds and coverings—the forms and fashions of life, the robes of ambition, the silken garments of luxury, the fair array of competence and comfort, and the fair *semblances* of comfort and happiness—strip the mind naked and bare to the view, and unfold those workings within, where feelings and principles make men happy, or miserable; and we should no more have such a thing as religious indifference in the world! Sin there might be—outbreaking passion, outrageous vice; but apathy there could not be. It would not require a sentiment of rectitude even, it would hardly need that a man should have any religion at all, to feel an interest in things so vital to his welfare. Why do men care as they do for worldly things? Is it not because they expect happiness, or think to ward off misery with them? Only let them be convinced, then, that happiness and misery depend much more upon the principles and affections of their own minds, and would they not transfer the greater portion of their interest to those principles and affections? Would it not result from a kind of mental necessity, like that which obliges the artisan to look to the mainspring of his machinery? Add, then, to this distinct perception of the real sources of happiness, an ardent benevolence, an earnest desire for men's welfare; and from this union would spring that spiritual zeal, that ardour in the concerns of religion and benevolence, of which so much is said, so little is felt, and of which the deficiency is so much lamented. I am willing to make allowance for constitutional differences of temperament, and indeed for many difficulties; but still I maintain that there is enough in the power of religious truths and affections to overcome all obstacles. I do maintain, that if the objects of religion were perceived to be what they are, and were felt as they ought to be, and as every man is capable of feeling them, we should no more have such things among us as dull sermons, or dull books of piety, or dull conferences on religion, than dull conversations on the exchange, or dull pleadings at the bar, or even than dull communications of slander by the fire-side.

I have thus far been engaged with stating the obvious utility and certain efficacy of the right conviction on this subject. But I have done it as preliminary to a closer argument for the right conviction. Let us, then, enter more fully upon consideration of the great spiritual interest. Let us, my brethren, enter somewhat at large into the consideration of religion as an interest; and of the place which it occupies among human interests. Among the cares of life, let us consider the care of the soul. For it is certain that the interior, the spiritual being, has as yet obtained no just recognition in the maxims of this world.

The mind, indeed—if we would but understand it—is the great central power in the movements of this world's affairs. All the scenes of this life, from the busiest to the most quiet, from the gravest to the gayest, are the varied developments of that same mind. The world is spread out as a theatre for one great action—the action of the mind; and it is so to be regarded, whether as a sphere of trial or of suffering, of enjoyment or of discipline, of private interests or of public history. Life, with all its cares and pursuits, with all its aspects of the superficial, the frivolous, and the gross, is but the experience of a mind. Life, I say—dull, plodding, weary life, as many call it, is, after all, a

spiritual scene; and this is the description of it that is of the deepest import to us.

I know and repeat, that the appearances of things, to many at least, are widely different from this representation. I am not ignorant of the prevailing and worldly views of this subject. There are some, I know, who look upon this life as a scene not of spiritual interests, but of worldly pleasures. The gratifications of sense, the opportunities of indulgence, the array in which fashion clothes its votaries, the splendour of entertainments, the fascinations of amusement, absorb them; or absorb at least all the admiration they feel for the scene of this life. Upon others, again, I know that the cloud of affliction descends; and it seems to them to come down visibly. Evil and trouble are to them, mainly, things of condition and circumstance. They are thinking chiefly of this thing as unfortunate, and of that as sad; and they forget that intrinsic character of the mind which lends the darkest hue, and which might give an aspect of more than earthly brightness to all their sufferings. And then again; to the eyes of others toil presents itself; with rigid sinews and strong arm, indeed, but weary too—weary, worn down with fatigue, and perhaps disconsolate in spirit. And to its earthly-minded victims—for victims they are with that mind—it seems, I know, as if this world were made but to work in; and as if death, instead of being the grand entrance to immortality, were sufficiently commended to them as a rest and a release. And last of all, gain, the master-pursuit of all, since it ministers to all other pursuits, urges its objects upon our attention. There are those, I know, to whom this world—world of spiritual probation and immortal hope as it is—is but one great market-place; a place for buying and selling and getting profit; a place in which to hoard treasures, to build houses, to enjoy competence, or to lavish wealth.

And these things, I know, are called interests. The matters of religion are instructions; aye, and excellent instructions—for men can garnish with epithets of eulogium the objects on which they are to bestow nothing but praise. And such, alas! are too often the matters of religion; they are excellent instructions, glorious doctrines, solemn ordinances, important duties; but to the mass of mankind they are not yet interests. That brief word, with no epithet, with no pomp of language about it, expresses more, far more, than most men ever really attribute to religion and the concerns of the soul. Nay, and the interest that is felt in religion—I have spoken of dulness—but the interest that is felt in religion is often of a very doubtful, superficial unreal character. Discourses upon religion excite a kind of interest, and sometimes it might seem as if that interest were strong. And strong of its kind it may be. But of what kind is it? How deep, how efficient is it? How many are there that would forego the chance of a good mercantile speculation, for the moral effect of the most admirable sermon that ever was preached? Oh, no: then it is a different thing. Religion is a good thing by the bye; it is a pleasant thing for entertainment; it is a glorious thing to muse and meditate upon; but bring it into competition or comparison with real interests, and then, to many, it at once becomes something subtile, spiritual, invisible, imperceptible:—it weighs nothing, it counts nothing, it will sell for nothing, and in thousands of scenes, in thousands of dwellings in this world, it is held to

be good for nothing! This statement, God knoweth, is made with no lightness of spirit, though it had almost carried me, from the vividness of the contrast which it presents, to lightness of speech. How sad and lamentable is it, that beings whose soul is their chief distinction, should imagine that the things which most concern them are things of appearance. I said, the vividness of the contrast; yet in truth it has been but half exhibited. It seems like extravagance to say it, but I believe it is sober truth, that there are many whom the very belief, the acknowledged record of their immortality has never interested half so deeply as the frailest leaf on which a bond or a note is written—many whom no words of the gospel ever aroused and delighted, and kindled to such a glow of pleasure as a card of compliment or a sentence of human eulogium! Indeed, when we draw a line of division between the worldly and spiritual, between the beings of the world and the beings of the soul, between creatures of the outside and creatures of the intellect and of immortality, how few will really be found among the elect, the chosen, and faithful. And how many, who could scarcely suspect it, perhaps, would be found on the side of the world—would be found among those who, in their pursuits and judgments, are more affected by appearances than by realities; who are more powerfully acted upon by outward possessions than by inward qualities; who, even in their loftiest sentiments, their admiration of great and good men, have their enthusiasm full as much awakened by the estimation in which those men are held as by their real merits.

And when we consider all this, when we look upon the strife of human passions too, the zeal, the eagerness, the rivalship, the noise and bustle with which outward things are sought; the fear, the hope, the joy, the sorrow, the discontent, the pride of this world—all, to so great an extent, fastening themselves upon what is visible and tangible, it is not strange that many should come almost insensibly to feel as if they dwelt in a world of appearances, and as if nothing were real and valuable but what is seen and temporal. It is not altogether strange that the senses have spread a broad veil of delusion over the earth, and that the concerns of every man's mind and heart have been covered up and kept out of sight by a mass of forms and fashions, and of things called interests.

And yet, notwithstanding all these aspects of things, I maintain, and I will show, that the real and main interest which concerns every man lies in the state of his own mind; that habits are of far more consequence to him than possessions and treasures; that affections, simple and invisible things though they be, are worth more to him than rich dwellings, and broad lands, and coveted honours. I maintain, that no man is so worldly, or covetous, or voluptuous—that no man is so busy, or ambitious, or frivolous, but this is true of him. Let him be religious or not religious, let him be the merest slave of circumstances, the merest creature of vanity and compliment that ever existed, and still it is true, and none the less true, that his welfare lies within. There are no scenes of engrossing business, tumultuous pleasure, hollow-hearted fashion, or utter folly, but the deepest principles of religion are concerned with them. Indeed, I look upon all these varied pursuits as the strugglings of the deeper mind,—as the varied developments of the one great desire of happiness. And he who forgets that deeper mind, and sees nothing, and thinks of

nothing but the visible scene, I hold to be as unwise as the man who, entering upon the charge of one of our manufactories, should gaze upon the noisy and bustling apparatus above, should occupy himself with its varied movements, its swift and bright machinery, and its beautiful fabrics, and forget the mighty wheel that moves all from beneath.

But let us pursue the argument. The *mind*, it will be recollected, is that which is happy or unhappy—not goods and fortunes; not even the senses; they are but the inlets of pleasure to the mind. But this, as it is a mere truism, though a decisive one in the case, is not the proposition which I am to maintain. Neither am I to argue, on the other hand, that the mind is independent of circumstances; that its situation, in regard to wealth or poverty, distinction or neglect, society or solitude, is a thing of no consequence. As well say that its relation to health or sickness is a thing of no consequence. But this I say and maintain, that what every man has chiefly at stake, lies in the mind; that his excellence depends entirely upon that; that his happiness ordinarily depends more upon the mind itself, upon its own state and character, than upon any outward condition; that those evils with which the human race is afflicted are mainly evils of the mind; and that the care of the soul which religion enjoins, is the grand and only remedy for human wants and woes.

The considerations which bear upon this estimate of the real and practical welfare of men, may be drawn from every sphere of human life and action; from every contemplation of mankind, whether in their condition, relations, or attributes: from society, from God's providence, from human nature itself. Let us, then, in the first place, consider *society* in several respects; in a general view of the evils that disturb or afflict it; in its intercourse; in its domestic scenes; in its religious institutions; and in its secular business and worldly condition. These topics will occupy the time that remains for our present meditation.

It is the more desirable to give some latitude to this part of our illustration, because it is in social interests and competitions especially, that men are apt to be worldly; *i. e.* to be governed by considerations extrinsic and foreign to the soul. The social man, indeed, is often worldly, while the same man in retirement is, after his manner, devout.

What, then, are the evils in society at large? I answer, they are, mainly, evils of the mind. Let us descend to particulars. Some, for instance, are depressed and irritated by neglect, and others are elated and injured by flattery. These are large classes of society around us; and the first, I think, by far the largest class. Both are unfortunate, both are wrong, probably; and not only so, but society is wrong for treating them in these ways,—and the wrong, the evil in every instance, lies in the mind. Some, again, want excitement, want object; and duty and religion would fill their hearts with constant peace, and with a plenitude of happy thoughts. Others want restraint, want the power to deny themselves, and want to know that such self-denial is blessed; and true piety would teach them this lofty knowledge; true piety would gently and strongly control all their passions. In short, ennui and excess, intemperance, slander, variance, rivalship, pride, and envy,—these are the miseries of society, and they are all miseries that exist in the mind. Where would our account end if we were to enumerate all the things that awaken our fears in the

progress and movements of the social world around us? Good men differ and reject each other's light and countenance, and bad men, alas! agree but too well; wise men dispute, and fools laugh; the selfish grasp; the ambitious strive; the sensual indulge themselves; and it seems, at times, as if the world were going surely, if not swiftly, to destruction! And why? Only, and always, and everywhere, because the mind is not right. Put holy truth in every false heart, instil a sacred piety into every worldly mind, and a blessed virtue into every fountain of corrupt desires; and the anxieties of philanthropy might be hushed, and the tears of benevolent prayer and faith might be dried up, and patriotism and piety might gaze upon the scene and the prospect with unmingled joy. Surely, then, the great interests of society are emphatically the interests of religion and virtue.

And if we estimate the condition of society upon the great scale of its national interests, we shall find that intellectual and moral character marks every degree upon that scale. Why is it that the present grand era of promise in the world is so perilous too? Why is it that Europe, with her struggling multitude of states, and her struggling multitude of people, cannot safely work out that great political reform, to which the eyes of her thousands and her millions are anxiously and eagerly looking? Why is the bright and broad pathway before her, darkened to the vision of the philosophic and the wise—darkened with doubt and apprehension? Only, I repeat, and always, and everywhere, because the mind is not right. Put sound wisdom and sobriety, and mutual good-will, into the hearts of all rulers and people, and the way would be plain, and easy, and certain, and glorious.

But let us contract again the circle of our observation. Gather any circle of society to its evening assembly. And what is the evil there? He must think but little who imagines there is none. I confess that there are few scenes that more strongly dispose me to reflection than this. I see great and signal advantages, fair and fascinating opportunities for happiness. The ordinary, or rather the ordinarily recognised evils of life have no place in the throng of social entertainment. They are abroad, indeed, in many a hovel and hospital, and by many a wayside; but from those brilliant and gay apartments they are, for a time, excluded. The gathering is of youth, and lightness of heart, and prosperous fortune. The manly brow flushed with the beauty of its early day, the fair form of outward loveliness, the refined understanding, the accomplished manner, the glad parent's heart, and confiding filial love, and music, and feasting, are there; and yet beneath many a soft raiment and many a silken fold, I know that hearts are beating which are full of disquietude and pain. The selfishness of parental anxiety, the desire of admiration, the pride of success, the mortification of failure, the vanity that is flattered, the ill-concealed jealousy, the miserable affectation, the distrustful embarrassment,—that comprehensive difficulty which proceeds to some extent indeed from the fault of the individual but much more from the general fault of society —these are the evils from which the gayest circles of the social world need to be reformed; and these, too, are evils in the mind. They are evils which nothing but religion and virtue can ever correct. The remedy must be applied where the disease is, and that is to the soul.

But now follow society to its homes. There is, indeed, and eminently, the scene of our happiness or of our misery. And it is too plain to be insisted on, that domestic happiness depends, ordinarily and chiefly, upon domestic honour and fidelity, upon disinterestedness, generosity, kindness, forbearance; and the vices opposite to these are the evils that embitter the peace and joy of domestic life. Men in general are sufficiently sensible to this part of their welfare. Thousands all around us are labouring by day, and meditating by night, upon the means of building up, in comfort and honour, the families with whose fortunes and fate their own is identified. Here, then, if anywhere—here in these homes of our affection, are interests. And surely, I speak not to discourage a generous self-devotion to them, or a reasonable care of their worldly condition. But I say, that this *condition* is not the main thing, though it is commonly made so. I say that there is something of more consequence to the happiness of a family than the apartments it occupies, or the furniture that adorns them; something of dearer and more vital concernment than costly equipage, or vast estates, or coveted honours. I say, that if its members have anything within them that is worthy to be called a mind, their main interests are their thoughts and their virtues. Vague and shadowy things they may appear to some; but let a man be ever so worldly, and this is true; and it is a truth which he cannot help; and all the struggle of family ambition, and all the pride of its vaunted consequence and cherished luxury, will only the more demonstrate it to be true.

Choose, then, what scene of social life you will, and it can be shown, beyond all reasonable doubt, that the main concern, the great interest there, is the state of the mind.

What is it that makes dull and weary services at church;—if, alas! we must admit that they sometimes are so. A living piety in the congregation, a fervent love of God, and truth, and goodness, would communicate life, I had almost said, to the dullest service that ever passed in the house of God; and if destitute of that piety, the preaching of an angel would awaken in us only a temporary enthusiasm. A right and holy feeling would make the house of God the place for devout meditation, a place more profoundly, more keenly interesting, than the thronged mart, or the canvassing hall, or the tribunal that is to pass judgment on a portion of our property. Do you say that the preacher is sometimes dull, and that is all the difficulty? No, it is not all the difficulty; for the dullest haranguer that ever addressed an infuriated mob, when speaking their sentiments, is received with shouts of applause. Suppose that a company were assembled to consider and discuss some grand method to be proposed for acquiring fortunes for themselves—some South-sea scheme, or project for acquiring the mines of Potosi; and suppose that some one should rise to speak to that company, who could not speak eloquently, nor in an interesting manner: grant all that—but suppose this dull speaker could state something, could state some fact or consideration, to help on the great inquiry; would the company say that they could not listen to him? Would the people say that they would not come to hear him again? No, the speaker might be as awkward and as prosaic as he pleased; he might be some humble observer, some young engineer—but he would have attentive and crowded auditories. A feeling in the hearers would supply all other deficiencies.

Shall this be so in worldly affairs, and shall there be nothing like it in religious affairs? Grant that the speaker on religion is not the most interesting; grant that he is dull; grant that his emotions are constitutionally less earnest than yours are—yet I say, what business have you to come to church to be passive in the service, to be acted on, and not yourselves to act? And yet more, what warrant have you to let your affections to your God depend on the infirmity of any mortal being? Is that awful presence that filleth the sanctuary, though no cloud of incense be there—is the vital and never-dying interest which you have in your own mind—is the wide scene of living mercies that surrounds you, and which you have come to meditate upon—is it all indifferent to you, because one poor, erring mortal is cold and dead to it? I do not ask you to say that he is not dull, if he is dull; I do not ask you to say that he is interesting; but I ask you to be interested in spite of him. His very dulness, if he is dull, ought to move you. If you cannot weep with him, you ought to weep for him.

Besides, the weakest or the dullest man tells you truths of transcendent glory and power. He tells you that "God is love;" and how might that truth, though he uttered not another word, or none but dull words—how might that truth spread itself out into the most glorious and blessed contemplations! Indeed, the simple truths are, after all, the great truths. Neither are they always best understood. The very readiness of assent is sometimes an obstacle to the fulness of the impression. Very simple matters, I am aware, are those to which I am venturing to call your attention in this hour of our solemnities; and yet do I believe, that if they were clearly perceived and felt among men at large, they would begin, from this moment, the regeneration of the world!

But pass now from the silent and holy sanctuary, to the bustling scene of this world's business and pursuit. "Here," the worldly man will say, "we have reality. Here, indeed, are interests. Here is something worth being concerned about." And yet even here do the interests of religion and virtue pursue him, and press themselves upon his attention.

Look, for instance, at the condition of life, the possession or the want of those blessings for which business is prosecuted. What is it that distresses the poor man, and makes poverty, in the ordinary condition of it, the burden that it is? It is not, in this country, it is not usually, hunger, nor cold, nor nakedness. It is some artificial want created by the wrong state of society. It is something nearer yet to us, and yet more unnecessary. It is mortification, discontent, peevish complaining, or envy of a better condition; and all these are evils of the mind. Again, what is it that troubles the rich man, or the man who is successfully striving to be rich? It is not poverty, certainly, nor is it exactly possession. It is occasional disappointment, it is continual anxiety, it is the extravagant desire of property, or, worse than all, the vicious abuse of it; and all these too are evils of the mind.

But let our worldly man who will see nothing but the outside of things, who will value nothing but possessions, take another view of his interest. What is it that cheats, circumvents, overreaches him? It is dishonesty. What disturbs, vexes, angers him? It is some wrong from another, or something wrong in himself. What steals his

purse, or robs his person? It is not some unfortunate mischance that has come across his path. It is a being in whom nothing worse resides than fraud and violence. What robs him of that which is dearer than property, his fair name among his fellows? It is the poisonous breath of foul and accursed slander. And what is it, in fine, that threatens the security, order, peace, and well-being of society at large; that threatens, if unrestrained, to deprive our estates, our comforts, our domestic enjoyments, our personal respectability, and our whole social condition, of more than half their value? It is the spirit of injustice, and wild misrule in the human breast; it is political intrigue, or popular violence; it is the progress of corruption, intemperance, lasciviousness,—the progress of vice and sin, in all their forms. I know that these are very simple truths: but if they are very simple and very certain, how is it that men are so worldly? Put obligation out of the question; how is it that they are not more sagacious and wary with regard to their interests? How is it that the means of religion and virtue are so indifferent to many in comparison with the means of acquiring property or office? How is it that many unite and contribute so coldly and reluctantly for the support of government, learning, and Christian institutions, who so eagerly combine for the prosecution of moneyed speculations, and of party and worldly enterprises? How is it, I repeat? Men desire happiness, and a very clear argument may be set forth to show them where their happiness lies. And yet here is presented to you the broad fact—and with this fact I will close the present meditation—that while men's welfare depends mainly on their own minds, they are actually and almost universally seeking it in things without them: that among the objects of actual desire and pursuit, affections and virtues, in the world's esteem, bear no comparison with possessions and honours; nay, that men are everywhere and every day sacrificing, ay, sacrificing affections and virtues—sacrificing the dearest treasures of the soul for what they call goods, and pleasures, and distinctions.

SPIRITUAL INTERESTS, REAL AND SUPREME.

JOHN vi. 27: "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto eternal life."

THE interests of the mind and heart—spiritual interests, in other words,—the interests involved in religion, are real and supreme. Neglected, disregarded, ridiculed, ruined as they may be—ruined as they may be in mere folly, in mere scorn—they are still real and supreme. Notwithstanding all appearances, delusions, fashions, and opinions to the contrary, this is true and will be true for ever. All essential interests centre ultimately in the soul; all that do not centre there are circumstantial, transitory, evanescent; they belong to the things that perish.

This is what I have endeavoured to show this morning, and for this purpose I have appealed in the first place to society.

My second appeal is to Providence. Society, indeed, is a part of the system of Providence; but let me invite you to consider, under this head, that the interest of the soul urged in the gospel is, in every respect, the great object of Heaven's care and providence.

The world, which is appointed for our temporary dwelling-place, was made for this end. The whole creation around us is, to the soul, a subject and a ministering creation. The mighty globe itself, with all its glorious apparatus and furniture, is but a theatre for the care of the soul—the theatre for its redemption. This vast universe is but a means. But look at the earth alone. Why was it made such as it is? Its fruitful soils, its rich valleys, its mountain-tops, and its rolling oceans; its humbler scenes, clothed with beauty and light, good even in the sight of their Maker, fair—fair to mortal eyes—why were they given? They were not given for mere sustenance and supply, for much less would have sufficed for that end. They need not have been so fair to have answered that end. They could have spared their verdure, and flowers, and fragrance, and still have yielded sustenance. The groves might never have waved in the breeze, but have stood in the rigidity of an iron forest; the hills might not have been moulded into forms of beauty, the streams might not have sparkled in their course, nor the ocean have reflected the blue depths of heaven; and yet they might have furnished all needful sustenance. No, they were not given for this alone; but they were given to nourish and kindle in the human soul a glory and a beauty, of which all outward grandeur and loveliness are but the image—given to show forth the majesty and love of God, and to form in man a resemblance to that majesty and love. Think, then, of a being in such a position, and with such a ministry, made to be the intelligent companion of God's glorious works, the interpreter of nature, the Lord of the creation,—made to be the servant of God

alone. And yet this being—oh! miserable disappointment and failure! —makes himself the slave of circumstances, the slave of outward goods and advantages, the slave of everything that he ought to command.

I know that he must toil and care for these things. But wherefore? Why must he toil and care? For a reason, I answer, which still urges upon him the very point we are considering. It had been as easy for the Almighty to have caused nature spontaneously to bring forth all that man needs, to have built as a part of the frame of the earth, enduring houses for us to dwell in, to have filled them with all requisite comforts, and to have relieved us, in short, from the necessity of labour and business. Why has he not done thus? Still, I answer, for the same cause, with the same moral design, as that with which the world was made. Activity is designed for mental improvement; industry for moral discipline; business for the cultivation of manly, and high, and noble virtues. When, therefore, a man enters into the active pursuits of life,—though he pleads the cares of business as an excuse for his neglect,—yet it is then especially, and that by the very teaching of Providence, that he should be reminded of his spiritual welfare. He could not with safety to his moral being—this is the theory of his condition,—he could not with safety be turned full and free into the domain of nature. He goes forth, therefore, bearing burdens—burdens of care, and wearing the shackles of necessity. The arm that he stretches out to his toil wears a chain, for he must work. And on the tablet where immortal thoughts are to be written, he writes words,—soon to be erased, indeed,—but words of worldly care and foresight, for he *must* provide. And yet how strange and passing strange is it! the occupations and objects that were given for discipline, and the trial of the spirit, and the training of it to virtue, are made the ultimate end and the chief good; yes, these which were designed for humble means of good to the soul, are made the engrossing pursuits, the absorbing pleasures and possessions, in which the soul itself is forgotten and lost!

Thus spiritual in its design is nature. Thus spiritual in its just aspects is the scene of life; no dull scene when rightly regarded; no merely wearisome, uncompensated toil, or perplexing business, but a ministration to purposes of infinite greatness and sublimity.

We are speaking of human interests. God also looks upon the interest of his creatures. But he seeth not as man seeth. Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart. He sees that all human interests centre there. He sees there the gathering, the embosoming, the garnering up of all that is precious to an immortal creature. Therefore it is, that as the strongest proof of his love to the world, he gave his Son to live for our teaching and guidance, and to die for our redemption from sin, and death, and hell. Every bright example, every pure doctrine, every encouraging promise, every bitter pang endured, points to the soul for its great design and end. And let me say, that if I have seemed to any one to speak in language over refined or spiritual, I can no otherwise understand the teachings of the great Master. His words would often be mystery and extravagance to me if I did not feel that the soul is everything, and that the world is nothing but what it is to the soul. With this perception of the true value of things, I require no transcendental piety; I require nothing

but common sense to understand what he says when he pronounces men to be deaf, and blind, and diseased, and dead in sins; for, to give up the joys of soul for the joys of sense, to neglect the heart for the outward condition, to forego inward good in the eagerness for visible good, to forget and to forsake God amidst his very works and mercies —this is, indeed, a mournful blindness, a sad disorder of the rational nature, and when the evil is consummated, it is a moral death! True, there may be no tears for it, save in here and there one who retires from the crowd to think of the strange delusion, and the grievous misfortune, and the degrading unworthiness. There are no tokens of public mourning for the calamity of the soul. Men weep when the body dies; and when it is borne to its last rest, they follow it with sad and mournful procession. But for the dying soul there is no open lamentation; for the lost soul there are no obsequies. And yet, when the great account of life is made up—though the words we now speak can but approach to the truth, and may leave but slight impression—the things we may then remember—God forbid that we should have them to remember!—but the things we *may* then have to remember—life's misdirected toil, the world's delusions, the thoughts unguarded, the conscience every day violated, the soul for ever neglected—these, oh! these will weigh upon the spirit, like those mountains which men are represented in prophetic vision as vainly calling upon to cover them.

III. But I am now verging upon the third and final argument which I proposed to use, for the care of our spiritual interests, and that is to be found in their value.

I have shown that society, in all its pursuits, objects, and scenes, urges this care; that nature, and providence, and revelation, minister to it; and I now say, that the soul is intrinsically and independently worth this care. Put all consequences to social man out of sight, if it be possible; draw a veil over all the bright and glorious ministry of nature; let the teachings of Providence all be silent; let the gospel be a fable; and still the mind of man has a value which nothing else has, it is worth a care which nothing else is worth, and to the single solitary individual it ought to possess an interest which nothing else possesses.

Indeed at every step by which we advance in this subject, the contrast between what is and what ought to be, presses upon us. Men very well understand the word value. They know very well what interests are. Offices, stocks, monopolies, mercantile privileges, are interests. Nay, even the chances of profit are interests so dear, that men contend for them, and about them, almost as if they were striving for life. And value—how carefully, and accurately, and distinctly is that quality stamped upon every object in this world! Currency has value, and bonds have value; and broad lands, and freighted ships, and rich mines, are all marked down in the table of this strict account. Go to the exchange, and you shall know what they are worth; and you shall know what men will give for them. But the stored treasures of the heart, the unsunned, the unfathomable mines that are to be wrought in the soul, the broad and boundless realms of thought, the freighted ocean of man's affections—of his love, his gratitude, his hope—who will regard them?—who seek for them, as if they were brighter than gold, dearer than treasure?

The mind, I repeat—how little is it known or considered! That

all which man permanently is,—the inward being, the divine energy, the immortal thought, the boundless capacity, the infinite aspiration—how few value this, this wonderful mind, for what it is worth! How few see it—that brother mind—in others; see it in all the forms of splendour and wretchedness alike—see it, though fenced around with all the artificial distinctions of society—see it, through the rags with which poverty has clothed it, beneath the crushing burthens of life, amidst the close pressure of worldly troubles, wants, and sorrows—see it and acknowledge and cheer it in that humble lot, and feel that the nobility of earth, that the commencing glory of heaven, is there! Nor is this the worst, nor the strongest view of the case. Men do not feel the worth of their own minds. They are very proud, perhaps; they are proud of their possessions, they are proud of their *minds*, it may be, as distinguishing them; but the intrinsic, the inward, the infinite *worth* of their own minds they do not perceive. How many a man is there who would feel, if he were introduced into some magnificent palace, and were led through a succession of splendid apartments, filled with rich and gorgeous furniture—would feel, I say, as if he, lofty immortal being as he is, were but an ordinary thing amidst the tinselled show around him; or would feel as if he were a more ordinary being, for the perishing glare of things amidst which he walked! How many a man, who, as he passed along the way-side, saw the chariot of wealth rolling by him, would forget the intrinsic and eternal dignity of his own mind, in a poor degrading envy of that vain pageant—would feel himself to be an humbler creature, because, not in mind, but in mensuration, he was not quite so high! And so long as this is the case, do you believe that men understand their own minds, that they know what they possess within them? How many in fact, feel as if that inward being, that mind, were respectable, chiefly because their bodies lean on silken couches, and are fed with costly luxuries! How many respect themselves, and look for respect from others, in proportion as they grow more rich, and live more splendidly,—not more wisely,—and fare more sumptuously every day. Surely it is not strange, while all this is true, that men should be more attracted by objects of sense and appetite than by miracles of wisdom and love. And it is not strange that the spiritual riches which man is exhorted to seek are represented in scripture as "hid treasures;" for they are indeed hidden in the depths of the soul—hidden, covered up, with worldly gains and pomps and vanities. It is not strange that the kingdom of heaven—that kingdom which is within—is represented as a treasure buried in a field: the flowers bloom and the long grass waves there, and men pass by and say that it is beautiful; but this very beauty, this very luxuriance, conceals the treasure. And so it is in this life, that luxury and show, fashion and outward beauty, worldly pursuits and possessions attract the eyes of men, and they know not the treasure that is hidden in every human soul.

Yes, the treasure—and the treasure that is in every soul. The difference that exists among men is not so much in their nature, not so much in their intrinsic power, as in the power of communication. To some it is given to unbosom and embody their thoughts; but all men, more or less, feel those thoughts. The very glory of genius, the very rapture of piety, when rightly revealed, are diffused and spread abroad, and shared among unnumbered minds. When eloquence and poetry

speak,—when the glorious arts, statuary, and painting, and music,—when patriotism, charity, virtue, speak to us with all their thrilling power, do not the hearts of thousands glow with a kindred joy and ecstasy? Who's here so humble, who so poor in thought or in affection, as not to feel this? Who's here so low, so degraded I had almost said, as not sometimes to be touched with the beauty of goodness? Who's here with a heart made of such base materials as not sometimes to respond, through every chord of it, to the call of honour, patriotism, generosity, virtue? What a glorious capacity is this!—a power to commune with God and angels!—a reflection of the brightness of heaven—a mirror that collects and concentrates within itself all the moral splendours of the universe—a light kindled from heaven that is to shine brighter and brighter for ever! For what, then, my friends, shall we care as we ought to care for this? What can man bear about with him—what office, what array, what apparel—that shall beget such reverence as the soul he bears with him? What circumstances of outward splendour can lend such imposing dignity to any being, as the throne of inward light and power, where the spirit reigns for ever? What work of man shall be brought into comparison with this work of God? I will speak of it in its simplest character—I say a thought, a bare thought,—and yet I say, what is it—and what is its power and mystery? Breathed from the inspiration of the Almighty; partaking of infinite attributes; comprehending, analyzing, and with its own beauty clothing all things; and bringing all things and all themes—earth, heaven, eternity—within the possession of its momentary being; what is there that man can form—what sceptre or throne—what structure of ages—what empire of wide-spread dominion—can compare with the wonders and the grandeur of a single thought? It is that alone of all things that are made—it is that alone that comprehends the Maker of all. That alone is the key which unlocks all the treasures of the universe. That alone is the power that reigns over space, time, eternity. That, under God, is the sovereign dispenser to man of all the blessings and glories that lie within the compass of possession, or within the range of possibility. Virtue, piety, heaven, immortality, exist not, and never will exist for us, but as they exist, and will exist in the perception, feeling, *thought*—of the glorious mind.

Indeed, it is the soul alone that gives any value to the things of this world; and it is only by raising the soul to its just elevation above all other things, that we can look rightly upon the purposes of this life. This, to my apprehension, is not only a most important, but a most practical view of the subject.

I have heard men say, that they could not look upon this life as a blessing. I have heard it more than insinuated, I have known it to be actually implied in solemn prayers to God, that it is a happiness to die in infancy. And nothing, you are aware, is more common, than to hear it said, that youth, unreflecting youth, is the happy season of life. And when, by reason of sickness or the infirmities of age, men outlive their activity and their sensitive happiness, nothing is more common than to look upon the continuance of life, in these circumstances, as a misfortune.

Now I do not wonder at these views, so long as men are as worldly as they usually are. I wonder that they do not prevail more. "Oh!

patient and peaceable men that ye are!"—I have been ready to say to the mere men of this world—"Peaceable men and patient! what is it that bears you up? What is it but a blind and instinctive love of life that can make you content to live?" But let the soul have its proper ascendency in our judgments, and all the mighty burthen is relieved. Life is then the education of the soul, the discipline of conscience, virtue, piety. All things then, are subordinate to this sublime purpose. Life is then one scene of growing knowledge, improvement, devotion, joy, and triumph. In this view, and in this view only, it is an unspeakable blessing; and those who have not yet taken this view, who have not yet given the soul its just preeminence, who have not yet become spiritually minded, are not yet prepared to live. It is not enough to say, as is commonly said, that they are not prepared to die; they are not prepared to *live*.

I would not address this matter, my friends, merely to your religious sensibility; I would address it to your common sense. It is a most serious and practical matter. There are many things in this world, as I have more than once said, which are called interests. But he who has not regarded his soul as he ought, who has gained no deep sense of things that are spiritual, has neglected the main interest, the chief use of this life, the grand preparation for living calmly, wisely, happily. It is a thousand times more serious for him, than if he had been negligent about property, about honour, or about worldly connexions and friendships.

With this reasonable subjection of the body to the soul, with this supreme regard to the soul as the guiding light of life, every man would feel that this life is a blessing, and that the continuance of it is a blessing. He would be thankful for its continuance, with a fervour which no mere love of life could inspire; for life to him, and every day of it, would be a glorious progress in things infinitely more precious than life. He would not think the days of unreflecting youth the happiest days. He would not think that the continuance of his being upon earth, even beyond active usefulness to others, was a misfortune or a mystery. He would not be saying, "Why is my life lengthened out?" He would feel that every new day of life spread before him glorious opportunities to be improved, glorious objects to be gained. He would not sink down in miserable ennui or despondency. He would not faint, or despair, or be overwhelmed with doubt, amidst difficulties and afflictions. He would feel that the course of his life, even though it pass on through clouds and storms, is glorious as the path of the sun.

Thus have I endeavoured to show that the care of the soul is the most essential of all human interests. Let no worldly man think himself wise. He might be a wise animal, but he is not a wise man. Nay, I cannot admit even that. For being what he is—animal or man, call him what you will—it is as truly essential that he should work out the salvation of the soul, as it is that he should work with his hands for his daily bread. How reasonable, then, is our Saviour's exhortation when he says, "Labour, therefore, not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life."

ON RELIGIOUS SENSIBILITY.*

EZEKIEL xxxvi. 26: "And I will give you a heart of flesh."

THE subject to which I wish to invite your thoughts in this discourse, is that religious sensibility, that spiritual fervour, in other words, that "heart of flesh," which is spoken of in the text.

To a sincere, and, at the same time, rational cultivator of his religious affections, it seems, at first view, a thing almost unaccountable, that Christians, apparently serious and faithful, should everywhere be found complaining of the want of religious feeling; that the grand, universal, standing complaint of almost the entire body of Christians should be a complaint of dulness. To one who has studied the principles of his own nature, or observed its tendencies; who knows that as visible beauty is made to delight the eye, so moral beauty is made to delight the mind; it seems a tremendous moral solecism, that all the affections of this nature and mind should become cold and dead the moment they are directed to the Infinite Beauty and Glory. It will not solve the problem to say that human nature is depraved. If, indeed, the depravity of men were such, that all enthusiasm for excellence had died out in the world, the general reason assigned might satisfy us. But what is the fact? What is the beauty of nature but a beauty clothed with moral associations? What is the highest beauty of literature, poetry, fiction, and the fine arts, but a moral beauty which genius has bodied forth for the admiration of the world? And what are those qualities of the human character which are treasured up in the heart and memory of nations—the objects of universal reverence and exultation, the themes of celebration, of eloquence, and of festal song, the enshrined idols of human admiration and love? Are they not patriotism, heroism, philanthropy, disinterestedness, magnanimity, martyrdom?

And yet the Being from whom all earthly beauty and human excellence are emanations, and of whom they are faint resemblances, is the very Being whom men tell us that they cannot heartily and constantly love: and the subject which is held most especially to connect us with that Being, is the very subject in which men tell us they cannot be heartily interested. No observing pastor of a religious congregation who has been favoured with the intimacy of one mind awaking to this subject, can fail to know that this is the grand complaint. The difficulty about feeling is the first great difficulty, and it is one which

* The substance of the two following discourses was addressed to the graduating class in the Theological Department of Harvard University, in 1834. This circumstance will account for the form that is given to some of the topics and illustrations.

presses upon every after-step of the religious course. Few arrive at that point where they can say with the apostle, "I know in whom I have believed." The common language and tone in which even religious confidence is expressed, do not go beyond such distrustful and desponding words as these—"I hope that I love God; I hope I have an interest in religion." Alas! how different from the manner in which friendship, love, domestic affection, breathe themselves into the ear, and thrill through the heart of the world!

It seems especially strange, that this complaint of dulness should be heard in places devoted to the acquisition of religious knowledge, and the cultivation of religious affection; and yet it is, perhaps, nowhere more common or emphatic. And it is confined to no one species of religious seminaries; it is confined, I mean, to no one sect. I have heard it in tones as emphatic from Catholic and Calvinistic seminaries as from any other. I have heard it as strongly expressed in other lands as in our own. But is it not very extraordinary? We hear it not from the studios of artists. We hear it not from the schools of law and medicine. There is no complaint of dulness, there is no want of enthusiasm about their appropriate objects in any of these. He, whose mind is occupied with the most abstruse questions of science or of the law; he who gazes upon a painting or upon a statue—ay, and he who gazes upon a skeleton, does not complain that he cannot be interested in them. I have heard such an one say, "Beautiful! beautiful!" in a case where admiration seemed most absurd; where it provoked a smile from the observer. And yet in schools—in schools of ardent youth—where the subject of attention is the Supreme and Infinite Beauty, if we may take confession for evidence—I do not say it is yours, my brethren, but I have often heard it from persons situated as you are—yes, among such persons, if we may take confession for evidence—all is cold and dead.

But I must here, and before I go any further, put forward one qualification. I do not think that confession is to be taken for evidence altogether, and without any qualification. One reason, doubtless, why Christians complain so much of the want of feeling, is to be found in the very sense which they entertain of the infinite value and greatness of the objects of their faith. And it is unquestionably true, that there is often a great deal of feeling in cases where there are very sad lamentations over the want of it. Lamentation certainly does not prove total insensibility.

Still, however, there is an acknowledged deficiency; not appertaining to any one class or condition, but to the entire body of Christians. And it is especially a deficiency of *natural*, *hearty*, *genuine*, *deep* sensibility. And, once more, it is a deficiency, sad, strange, and inexcusable, on a subject more than all others claiming our sensibility. And yet, again, it is a deficiency which, when existing on the part of the clergy, is most deplorable in its consequences. It is therefore everybody's interest, and that for every reason, to consider what are the causes, and what are the remedies, of this peculiar, prevailing, religious insensibility.

I have some question, indeed, whether this demand for sensibility—the popular rage, that is to say, for feeling, feeling alone—is not, in some views, mistaken, excessive, and wrong. But let me admit, for I

cannot resist, the strength, the supremacy, of the claim which religion has on our whole heart. The first and lawful demand of the mind awakened to religion, is to feel it. The last attainment is to feel it deeply, rationally, constantly. Of the awakened mind, the first consciousness always is—"I do not feel; I never did feel this subject as I ought. It claims to be felt. The solemn authority, and the unspeakable goodness of God; the great prospect of immortality; the strong bond of duty upon my nature; the infinite welfare of my soul—these are themes, if there be any such, upon which I ought to feel." The mind, thus aroused from worldly neglect to the greatest of subjects, will feel its coldness, its indifference to be a dreadful burthen, and it will sigh for deliverance: and the preacher, who has never such a mind to deal with, may well doubt whether he is preaching to any purpose. And in all its after-course it will hold a fervent religious sensibility to be indispensable to its peace. If its prayers are formal and heartless, if its love waxes cold, if its gratitude and humility are destitute of warmth and tenderness, it cannot be satisfied.

And it ought not to be satisfied. This demand for feeling in religion, I say, is right; it is just; and I am desirous, in this discourse, to meet it and to deal with it as such. And yet I am about to say, in the first place, that there are mistakes about it, and that in these mistakes are to be found some of the causes of the prevailing religious insensibility.

I. Is there not something wrong, then, in the first place, is there not something prejudicial to the very end in view in this vehement demand of feeling? I have said that it is mainly right, and that I intend so to regard it. But may there not be some mistake in the case? May not the demand for feeling, sometimes be made to the prejudice of feeling, and to the prejudice, also, of real practical virtue? I confess that I have been led at times to suspect that the craving of some for great religious feeling, in the preacher, though right in fact, yet was partly wrong in their minds. A person conscious of great religious deficiency, conscious of weekly and daily aberrations from the right rule and the religious walk, will be glad, of course, to have his feelings aroused on the sabbath; it gives him a better opinion of himself; it puts him on a better footing with his conscience; it, somehow brings up the moral account, and enables him to go on as if the state of his affairs were very well and prosperous. This, perhaps, explains the reason, if such, indeed, be the fact, why, in some cases, a very pathetic and fervent preacher seems to do less good than a man of much inferior endowments. In this latter case, the congregation cannot depend upon the periodical and passive excitement, and is obliged to resort to something else—to some religious activity of its own.

It appears to me, also, that the great religious excitements of the day answer the same purpose, however unintentionally, of keeping the people satisfied with general coldness and negligence.

But I was about to observe that this urgent demand for feeling is probably one of the causes of religious insensibility,—that is to say, the directness, urgency, and reiteration of the demand are unfavourable to a compliance with it. This importunity, with regard to feeling, does not allow it to spring up in the natural way. If it were applied to feeling on any other subject—to friendship, filial attachment, or parental affec-

tion—how certainly would it fail of success! Human feeling, in its genuine character, can never be forced, urged, compelled, or exhorted into action. The pulpit, I believe, has occasion to take a lesson from this principle of analogy. It is not the way to make the people feel, to be telling them constantly that they must feel, to be complaining continually of their coldness, to be threatening them perpetually with heaven's judgments upon their insensibility. And he who has used only these methods of awakening emotion, need not wonder that the people have no feeling about religion. No, let the preacher himself feel; let him express his feeling, not as if he had any design upon the feelings of others, but as if he could not help it; let him do this, and he will find hearts that sympathize with him. The chill of death may have been upon them—it may have been upon them for years; the rock may never have been smitten, the desert never cheered; but there is a holy unction—a holy unction of feeling, which is irresistible. It is like the rod of miracles in the hand of Moses; the waters will flow at its touch; and there will be life, and luxuriance, and beauty, where all was barrenness, and desolation before.

I do not say that there will, of necessity, be actual regeneration in the heart where this feeling is excited; I do not say that there will certainly be fruit where all this verdure and beauty are seen; for the importance of feeling is often exaggerated to that degree that it is made a substitute for practical virtue. And thus the mistake we are considering is made unfavourable to religious sensibility in another way; for, although at first view it seems to favour sensibility to make so much of it—although, in fact, it exaggerates its importance; yet, as the nature of the exaggeration is to make feeling all-sufficient of itself, the effect, of course, is to draw off attention from that basis of principle and habit which are essential to the strength and permanency of feeling. This is so much to admire the beauty and luxuriance of vegetation in one's field, as to forget and neglect the very soil from which it springs. Of course the luxuriance and beauty will soon fade away. And so the common religious sensibility is like the seed which was sown upon stony places; forthwith it springs up because it has no deepness of earth; and because it has no root, it withers away. Or it is like the torrent after a shower. There has been a commotion in the moral elements of society; there have been thunderings in heaven, and an outpouring from the skies; and fresh streams are gushing forth and flowing on every side; and how many, in their agitation, their enthusiasm, and their zeal, will mistake these noisy freshets for the deep, pure, silent, ever-flowing river of life!

Nay, this vehement demand for feeling tends to throw an interested and mercenary character over it, which are also extremely unfavourable to its cultivation. There is that trait of nobleness still left in human nature, that it will not barter its best affections for advantage. He who is striving with all his might to feel, only because feeling will save him, is certain to fail. This is the reason why none are ever found so bitterly complaining of the want of feeling, as men often are in the midst of a great religious excitement. They see the community around them aroused to great emotion; they are told that this is the way to be saved; the fear of perdition presses upon them; under this selfish fear they strive, they agonize, they goad themselves, they would give the

world to feel; and the result is, that they can *feel nothing!* Their complaint is, and it is true, that their heart is as cold as a stone. No: —men must feel religion, if at all, because it is right to feel it. The great subject of religion must sink into their hearts, in retirement, in silence, without agitation, without any thought of advantage. They must feel, if at all, involuntarily; they must feel, as it were, because they cannot help feeling.

This, too, is one of the reasons, as I believe, why there is so little religious sensibility in theological seminaries. There is a perpetual demand for sensibility; society demands it; religious congregations demand it; the student is constantly reminded by his fellows, by every body, that he cannot succeed without it; that his eloquence, his popularity, depend upon it; and every such consideration tends directly to chill his heart. He is ashamed to cultivate feeling under such influences. Let him, then, forget all this; let him forget that it is his interest, almost that it is his duty to feel; let him sit down in silence and meditation; let him spread the great themes of religion before him, and with deep attention, ay, with the deep attention of prayer, let him ponder them, and he will find that which he did not seek; he will find that feeling is the least thing, the easiest thing, the most inevitable thing in his experience.

II. In the second place, there are mistakes—and they arise, in part, from the one already stated,—concerning the characteristics and expressions of religious sensibility; and these mistakes, too, like the former, are unfriendly to its cultivation.

I shall not think it necessary to dwell long upon this topic—or, at least, not upon its more obvious aspects. Every one, unhappily, is but too familiar with the extravagances, and the extravagant manifestations of religious feeling. They are as public as they are common. Their effect, in repelling and estranging the feelings of multitudes from religion, is no less clear.

In a celebrated volume of Essays, published some years ago, you will remember one "On the aversion of men of taste to Evangelical religion." The aversion is there taken for granted; and, indeed, it is sufficiently evident. Whether the taste be right, or the religion be right, the fact of their contrariety is indisputable. The whole body of our classic English literature—that literature with which the great mass of readers is constantly communing and sympathising—is stamped with nothing more clearly than an aversion to what is called Evangelical religion. The peculiarities of its creed, of its feelings, of its experiences, of its manners, of its tones of speech, have all been alike offensive to that taste which is inspired by the mass of our best English reading.

But the effect, unhappily, does not stop with repelling the mind from religion in the Evangelical form. It repels the mind from religion in every form. And more especially, it begets a great distrust of all religious earnestness. Hence all the solicitude then is, especially among the cultivated classes, to have everything sober, calm, rational, in religion. Hence the alarm that is so easily taken at every appearance of zeal and enthusiasm. It seems to be thought by many, that there can be no religious earnestness but what breaks out into extravagance and fanaticism. If they had not identified two things essentially

different, they would be no more afraid of enthusiasm in religion, than they are afraid of enthusiasm in science, in literature, in the arts. It would be, in their account, a noble and beautiful thing. But now, the very description of a person as "zealous in his religion" carries with it a kind of imputation upon his understanding and liberality. Hence, in the train of consequences, it comes to pass that many are cold in religion. "For this cause, many sleep." They apparently think it better to sleep in security than to wake in distraction; they prefer stupor to madness; they had rather perish in their senses than in a fit of insanity; this, at least, is the light in which matters appear to them; and how is it strange, that, repelled by the ordinary forms of religious emotion, and indentifying all religious feeling with these, they should sink down into a cold, chilling, cheerless insensibility.

But I must not leave it to be supposed, that men of taste and refinement alone are exposed to this result. The truth is, that the popular sensibility on this subject has been itself deficient in real strength and true fervour; it has been remarkable, thus far, for wanting those qualities which were necessary to give it depth and impressiveness in its own sphere: and from no quarter have there been more bitter complaints of coldness, than from the very sphere of fanaticism. The observation may seem to be a singular one, perhaps, and the fact scarcely credible: but if you will take the pains to observe, I am confident you will find it to be true, that the wildest sects and the wildest excitements are precisely those from which there come, from time to time, the deepest confessions of coldness and stupidity. Yes, in the bosom of fanaticism is harboured the deepest and most painful doubt about the truth and reality of religion. And the reason is, that neither there, nor in any of the modifications of spiritual extravagance, has religion been familiar enough to have become an easy, natural, abiding guest: nor reflective enough to have settled down into a principle and habit; nor has it long enough rested in the soul, amidst quietness and silence, to have become incorporated with its nature.

And thus it comes to pass, that in many, perhaps in most minds, where religion gains admission, it is felt to be a strange, mysterious, extraordinary thing. I think, indeed, that the religious experience of the world, generally, has not got beyond this point; it is still an extraordinary thing. And it is obvious, that this sense of its being extraordinary, will not be favourable to composure, steadiness, and permanency of feeling, but rather to excitement, wonder, delight, and all those tumultuous emotions that speedily pass away.

I am afraid, too, that this consciousness of religious experience, as being something extraordinary, has another injurious and repulsive effect; that is to say, that it gives birth to that religious vanity, that spiritual pride, that sense of personal importance, which is so apt to spring up with religious zeal. I know, indeed, that the gospel demands humility: and I know that Christians have been much given to self-disparagement; but I know, too, that no sooner does a man "obtain religion," to use the common phrase, than his own sense of the great and wonderful thing which he conceives has happened to him, and the attentions of those around him, usually contribute to invest him with a very disagreeable air of self-importance. There is a strange delusion,

by which a man contrives to think himself very humble, and to be very proud at the same time. He says that he is the greatest of sinners, a most wonderful instance of the triumph of Divine grace; and perhaps he is never so proud as when he says it. His confession is made with a saving clause; and the saving clause is very likely to be more with him than the confession. He is the greatest of sinners; but then he is rescued. He is a most extraordinary instance of grace; but then it follows, certainly, that he is himself a very extraordinary person.

Whether this be a just account of the matter or not, it is certain that spiritual vanity has been, thus far in the world, one of the prevailing forms of religious experience. And since this quality,—I mean, vanity,—whether religious or otherwise, is always one of the most offensive and insufferable, since it always brings more unpopularity upon its possessor, I had almost said, than all other bad qualities put together, it is not strange that it should have brought some discredit upon religion, and especially upon religious zeal and earnestness. There are—there must be—not a few, who will stand aside and aloof, and say, "Let me have no religion rather than that:" and one of the most important duties of religious teaching is, to show them that they may have religion without presumption, pride, or ostentation; nay, and that the religion, which they hold in simplicity, modesty, and singleness of heart, with no thought of others, with no thought of themselves, will be far more deep, thorough, and fervent, as well as far more graceful and beautiful.

There is one effect of this sense of religion as something very extraordinary, which I must mention before leaving this topic; and that is, upon the manifestations of religious sensibility. The sense of the extraordinary, tends to give expansion and exuberance to the expression of religious feeling—tends, if the phrase will be understood, to too much manifestation. Our sensibility always takes arms against an appearance of this sort. This explains the reason why some religious conversation and some preaching, which seems to be charged and overcharged with religious fervour, which vents itself, perhaps, in a passion of tears, which is full of exclamations and entreaties, and exhorts us to feel with every moving interjection in the language, yet never moves us at all. The precise reason is, that the expression is overcharged. We wonder at our insensibility, perhaps; we think it is very wicked in us not to feel; but the fact is, we are, all this while, true to nature. Possibly some might think, though I will not suspect any one who hears me of holding the opinion, that this apology ought not to be stated; that self-reproach is so rare a thing, and so good a thing, that men should be left to accuse themselves as much as ever they will. I confess that I can understand no such reasoning as this. On the contrary, I have regretted to hear the language of self-reproach in such cases; because I do not think it just, and because I know that every false self-accusation tends to blunt the edge of the true self-accusation. Doubtless, men should always feel religion if they can; but the question is now, about being made to feel it by a particular manifestation. And I say, if the manifestation be overcharged; if it go beyond the feeling, rather than come short of it; if there be more expression, vociferation, gesture, than genuine emotion, it will inevitably, with the discerning, have an effect the very contrary of what was intended. No; let one speak to us by our fireside, or in the pulpit, with an emotion which he

is obliged to restrain; let it appear evident that he lays a check upon his feelings; let one stand before us—I care not with what varied expression—with the cheek flushed or blanched, with the tear suppressed or flowing, with the voice soft or loud, only so that the expression never seem to outrun, to exceed the feeling; and he is almost as sure of our sympathy as that we are human beings.

The observation I have made on this point, cannot be useless to any one, if it teach only this, that nothing forced or fictitious will answer any good purpose in religion; that if we would accomplish anything for ourselves or others in this great cause, we must engage in it with our whole heart; that the sources of real religious influence are none other than the fountains of the heart—the fountains of honest, earnest, irrepressible sensibility.

III. I must now add, in the third place, that there are mistakes, as in the vehement demand for religious sensibility, and concerning its nature and expressions, so also with regard to its Supreme Object.

We must allow, indeed, that on this point there are some intrinsic difficulties. There are difficulties attending the love of an Infinite, Eternal, Invisible, Incomprehensible Being. Our love of him must be divested of many of those sympathies and supports which enkindle and strengthen in us the love of one another. We feel obliged to guard every word in which we speak of him, and of our connexion with him. We must not say that our communion with him is sympathy, or that our love of him is attachment. We may not, with propriety, say that he is "dear" to us. Many, indeed, of those phrases, many of those modes of expression, in which we testify the strength and charm of our social affections, sink into awe and are hushed to silence before that Infinite and Awful Being. So at least, does the subject of devotion appear to me; and I must confess that the familiarity of expression which is sometimes witnessed in prayer, is extremely irreverent and shocking.

But those difficulties, which it is the tendency of ignorance and fanaticism to overlook, it is the tendency of immature reflection and philosophy to magnify. Reflection has gone just so far with some minds as to make it more difficult for them than it ought to be to approach their Maker. They regard his exaltation above them, as distance; his greatness, as separation from them. They look upon the very phrases "love of God," "communion with God," as phrases of daring import, and doubtful propriety. They shrink back from the freedom of popular language, and this, perhaps, they rightly do; but they retreat too far—they retreat to the opposite extreme of coldness and cold abstractions. They are sometimes almost afraid to address God as a Being; they worship some mighty abstraction; they are like those ancient philosophers who worshipped the light; they worship "an unknown God." I do not know that anything but the teachings of Jesus could ever have cured this error; the error at once of ancient philosophy and modern refinement. He "has brought us nigh to God." He has taught us that God is our Father. He has taught us to worship him with the profoundest reverence, indeed, but with boundless confidence and love. He has taught us that God does regard us; that he does look down from the height of his infinite heavens—that he does look down upon us, and upon our world—not exclusively, as some religion-

ists would teach, not as if there were no other world—but still that he does look down upon us, and our world, with paternal interest and kindness.

The mistake now stated is one which lies at the very threshold of devotion. But when we enter the temple of our worship, how many errors are there that darken its light and disfigure its beauty! The veil of the Jewish peculiarity is indeed rent in twain; but theology has lifted up other, and many, and darkening veils before "the holy of holies." Our sins, too, have separated between us and God, and our iniquities have hidden his face from us. Unworthy, afraid, superstitious, erring, grovelling in the dust, how can we love God, purely, freely, joyfully! How, even, can we *see* the perfection of God as we ought?

This, indeed, is the point upon which all difficulty presses. *Men do not* SEE *the perfection of God.* They do not identify that perfection with all that is glorious, beautiful, lovely, admirable, and enrapturing in nature, in character, in life, in existence. God's glory they conceive to be something so different from all other glory; God's goodness so different from all other goodliness and beauty, that they find no easy transition from one to the other. They mistake—and perhaps this is the most fatal part of the error—they mistake the very demand of God's goodness upon their love. They conceive of it as if there were something arbitrary, and importunate, and selfish in the demand. Demand itself repels them, because they do not understand it. They think of the Supreme Being in this attitude, somewhat as they would of a man, if he stood before them saying, "Love me, give me your heart, upon pain of my displeasure, and of long-enduring penal miseries for your disobedience." Divine goodness, thus regarded, does not, and cannot, steal into the heart, as the excellence of a human being does. And this, I say, is a mistake. Divine goodness, thus regarded, is mistaken —misapprehended altogether. There is not so much that is personal in God's claim for our hearts as there is in man's claim. It does not so much concern him, if I may speak so, that we should love him personally, as it concerns man that we should love him personally. He is not dependent on our love, as man is dependent upon it. The command which he lays upon us to love him, is but a part of the command to love all goodness. He equally commands us to love one another. Nay, he has graciously represented the want of love to one another as the evidence of want of love to him. He has thus, in a sense, identified these affections; and thus taught us, that an affection for excellence, whether in himself or in his creatures, is essentially the affection that he demands. The demand for our love, which the Infinite Being addresses to us, is infinitely generous. He requires us to love all goodness—to love it alike in himself and in others—to love goodness for goodness' sake—to love it because it is just that we should love it, because it is right, because it is for our welfare, because, in one word, it is all our excellence and all our happiness.

I must not dwell longer upon these mistakes; but, in leaving this topic, let me exhort every one to endeavour to correct them. With many, this will require a frequent, an almost constant effort. The influence of early education or of later error: theology, superstition, and sin, have so overshadowed their path, that they must not expect to see the light without much faithful endeavour. Let them be entreated by

everything most precious to them, to make it. And *thus* let them make the endeavour. *Let them see God in everything that they lawfully admire and love.* If there be any goodliness and loveliness in the world; if there be anything dear and delightful in the excellence of good men; if heaven from its majestic heights, if earth from its lowly beauty, sends one sweet or one sublime thought into your mind—think that this is a manifestation of the ever-beautiful, ever-blessed perfection of God. *Think*, I say emphatically, and let not your mind sleep—think for ever, that the whole universe of glory and beauty is one revelation of God. Think thus, I say,—thus faithfully and perseveringly; and you will find that no strength nor freedom of emotion in the world, is like the freedom and strength of devotion; that no joy, no rapture on earth, is like the joy, the rapture of piety!

ON RELIGIOUS SENSIBILITY.

EZEKIEL xxxvi. 26: "And I will give you a heart of flesh."

My object in the present discourse is to offer some remarks upon the remedies for the want of religious insensibility, or upon the means and principles of its culture.

And in entering upon this subject, I would say, that much is to be done by a correction of those mistakes which have been already mentioned. Let then something, I would venture to say, of this vehement demand for feeling be abated. Let not the feelings of religion be subjected to perpetual importunity, any more than the feelings of friendship, or of family affection. Let not feeling be made to occupy a place in religion that does not belong to it, as if it were the only thing and everything—thus drawing away attention from the principles that are necessary to give it permanency, from the soil that must nourish, and the basis that must support it. Let not religious feeling be appealed to in a way to impair its simplicity, disinterestedness, and purity.

In the next place, let the common mistakes about the nature and signs of religious sensibility be corrected. Let all excess and extravagance be checked as much as possible; and especially let those who would cultivate a fervent piety, make the necessary discrimination between religion and fanaticism. Let them not conclude that abuses are the only forms under which the religious principle can appear; that, in order to be zealous Christians, it is necessary to part with their modesty, or their taste. In fine, let religion become so familiar that it shall cease to be, in their minds, or in their thoughts of it, anything extraordinary; and then, let its manifestations be, like the expressions of all other high and pure feeling, unforced, natural, manly, strong, graceful, beautiful, and winning. Thus let our light shine before men, not as the glaring meteor, but as the common light of day, attractive, and cheering, and constant.

And once more, let an honest and persevering endeavour be made to correct those mistakes that prevail about the Supreme Object to which religious sensibility is chiefly directed. Let not God be regarded as some unintelligible abstraction, or inaccessible majesty. Let the Christian teaching be welcomed, which instructs us to believe and to feel that He is our Father. Let an effort be made by every mind to break through the clouds of superstition and sin, and to perceive what the divine perfection is. Let not God's command that we should love him be mistaken for anything more arbitrary or importunate or personal, than is the claim of disinterested human excellence to be loved. Let not the divine demand for our love be so construed as to chill or

repel our love. In fine, let no thought be suffered to enter our minds that shall detract from the infinite generosity, the infinite dignity, the infinite beauty, of the divine perfection. How shall God be truly loved, if he is not rightly known! Let him be rightly known, and love will as certainly follow as it will follow the knowledge of any other—of any human or angelic excellence. I do not say that it will certainly follow, but as certainly. Nay, why, if we rightly understood the subject, should it not be easier to love God than to love man? For man is full of imperfection that offends us, and with him too we are liable to have questions and competitions. But God is all-perfect; and with him our affections have nothing to do—but to love him.

Let me now proceed to offer a few suggestions more directly, upon the remedy for religious insensibility. And here let me say at once, that I have no specific to offer in the shape of a remedy; no new, and before unheard of method to propose. I have no set of rules to lay down, a mere formal observance of which will certainly bring about the desired result. Religious sensibility is to be cultivated like all other sensibility—*i. e.* rationally. And since it is impossible within my present limits to discuss the subject in all its parts and bearings, I shall confine myself to the defence and application of the rational method. And the rational method is the method of attention in the forms of meditation, reading, hearing, prayer; the method of association, which pays regard to the indirect influences of places, times, and moods of mind; and, finally, it is the method of consistency, by which no feeling is expected to be strong and satisfactory, but as the result of the whole character.

My remedy, then, for religious insensibility, under the blessing of heaven—it might sound strangely in the ears of some—but I boldly say that my remedy is reason. It is thought; it is reflection; it is attention; it is exercise of reason in every legitimate way. The true method, I say, is purely and strictly rational. And I say, moreover, that it is not that Christians have used their reason so much, but so little, that they have been so deficient in real feeling.

Reason and feeling, if they be not the same thing in different degrees of strength are yet so intimately connected, that no man may ever expect, on any subject, to feel deeply and habitually, who does not feel rationally. The slight sometimes thrown upon reason in religion is an invasion of the first law of the mind, the first law of heaven. This law is "elder scripture," and no more designed to be abrogated by the written word, than the law of gravitation is designed to be abrogated by the written word. The word proceeds upon the assumption that the intellect is to be addressed: it actually, and everywhere addresses it. The whole theory of human affections proceeds upon it. The grandest theoretical mistake of all in religion, is that by which feeling is separated from the intellect.

Nor am I at all sure, my brethren, little liable as it may be thought we are to the mistake, that we have altogether escaped it. When it is said, as it sometimes is said, that certain preaching is too intellectual for a plain congregation, or too rational for an humble congregation, I must think either that the meaning is false, or that the terms are used in a false sense. There never was too much intellect—there never was too much reason yet put into a sermon. There may have been too

little feeling; but it does not follow that there was too much reason. There may have been too much barren and useless speculation, but not too much intellect. Some of the most practical and devotional books in the world—such as Law's Serious Call, Baxter's Saint's Rest, the Sermons of Bishop Butler and of Dr. Paley, and the Works of Leighton—are specimens of the closest reasoning. A genuine, just, and powerful moral discourse, has need to be one of the keenest, closest, and most discriminating compositions in the world. Such were the discourses of our Saviour. Nothing could be farther from loose, rambling, common-place exhortations. Nothing could be farther from that style, which says, "Oh! my hearers, you must be good; you must be pious men; and you must feel on this great subject." No, the hearers, by close, cogent, home-put argument, were made to feel; and they said, "Never man spake like this man."

I may be thought singular, but I verily believe, that, in most moral discourses at this day, the grand defect is not so much a defect of feeling, as it is a defect of close and discriminating argument: and that higher powers of argumentation are precisely what are wanted in such sermons, to make them more weighty, practical, and impressive. And it is not the intellectual hearer, who can perhaps supply the deficiency, that most needs this; but the plain hearer, who is mystified, misled, and stupified by the want of clear and piercing discrimination. I have that respect for human nature in its humblest forms, as to think that the highest powers of man or angel would not be thrown away upon it; and I cannot believe that nothing but truisms and common-places, vague generalities and unstudied exhortations, are required in teaching religion to such a nature.

It is required of a man, to be sure, according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not. But if it be thought that the utmost, and far more than the utmost measure of human talent may not be well employed in religious discussion, how, let me ask, is that opinion to be defended against the charge of doing dishonour to religion? There is no other interest which is not held to be worthy of the profoundest discussion. He who is to plead the cause of some earthly right or property before the judges of the land or its legislators, will by deep study prepare himself to give the most able and elaborate views of the subject, be it of a title or a tariff, a bond or a bank. It is a great occasion, and must task all the powers of the mind to do it justice. But "a little plain sense,"—is not this the thought of some?—"a little plain sense, a little common-place thought, is good enough for religion!"

There are tasks for the religious teacher, and to name no other, that of disembarrassing religious experience from the many mistakes in which it is involved, is one that must carry the preacher far enough beyond the range of common-place truths, valuable as they may be, and one that is very necessary to the promotion of a just and healthful religious sensibility. And this only amounts to saying, that there are new things to be said, new views to be given in religion; that not plain and obvious things only are to be said, but that there is something to be told to many which they did not think of before. And what though the preacher *feel* his subject, and the people be impressed; yet, after all, the impression, the feeling may have much in it that is wrong. The whole subject of religious sensibility, its sources and the method of its

culture, may be very ill understood; and there is no little evidence that it is ill understood, from the fact, that most religious feeling is so artificial, so mechanical, so periodical, and fluctuating, and uncertain, instead of being habitual, and healthful, and strong. A man may feel very much within a very narrow compass of thought. Who has not often observed it? But who that has observed it would not think it desirable to carry him beyond this little mechanism, by which he continues from time to time (if I may speak so) to grind out a certain amount of feeling; to carry him beyond, I say, to those wide and generous views of religion, to that intelligent culture of his nature, from which religious feeling will spring naturally and freely, and flow abundantly, and in a full and living stream. There is all the difference here, and only of infinitely greater importance, that there is between the slavish machinist, governed by rules, and the intelligent artisan, discovering principles, constantly inventing and improving, and ever going on to perfection.

But it is time that I should proceed from the defence to the more particular application of my proposition. And this is, that feeling in religion to be deep and thorough, to be habitual, to be relied on to spring up with unvarying promptitude at every call of religion, *must be rational*, perfectly rational; rational in its nature, its methods of culture, its ends. You ask how you shall learn to feel on the subject of religion—with spontaneous freedom, with unaffected delight, and with true-hearted earnestness,—how you shall learn to feel in religion as you do in friendship, and in the family relations, and I answer, *rationally*. And I say, moreover, that provided a man really and honestly desires and strives to feel, the reason why he fails is, that there is something irrational in his views, irrational in his seeking, irrational in the whole method of his procedure. He has irrational views of the nature of religious feeling. He expects it to be some strange sensation or something supernatural, or some hallucination, or something he knows not what. Or he has wrong views of God. He does not see the glory and loveliness of his perfection. Or he has wrong ideas of the methods of obtaining religious feeling. He is indolently waiting for it, or irrationally expecting it to come upon him in some indescribable manner, or unreasonably looking for an influence from above which God has never promised. For, although he has promised help, he has not proffered in that help anything to be substituted for our own efforts: and our efforts are to be every way just as rational as if he had promised nothing. Or the seeker of religion has irrational views of the end. He does not distinctly see that his perfection, his happiness, is the end. If he did, he would be drawn on to seek it with a more willing and hearty earnestness. No, but he feels as if the demand for his heart in this matter were a mere arbitrary requisition, as if it were the bare will of some superior being, without any reason for it. He seeks religion, because he vaguely and blindly apprehends that it is something —that it is the prominent idea of thousands—something which he *must have*.

I say, that the process of obtaining a high and delightful religious sensibility, that sensibility which makes prayer always fervent, and meditation fruitful and satisfying, must be rational, and nothing but rational. And I do not say this in any spirit of defiance towards

that prevailing opinion which has fastened on this word, rational, the idea of coldness and indifference. I say it, because in sober truth and earnestness I know of no other way to feel the deep sense of religion, but to feel it rationally. It is out of my power—is it *within* any man's power?—to conceive of any other way to awaken emotion, but to fix the mind on those objects that are to awaken it. If I would feel the sentiment of gratitude and love to my Creator, I can conceive of no way of doing so, but to think of his goodness, his perfection; to spread before my mind all the images and evidences of his majesty, his perfection, his love. If I would feel the charms of virtue, I must contemplate her—I must *see* "virtue in her shape, how lovely." If I would love good men—which is a part of religion—I must know them, and mingle with them; I must talk with them, or read of them, and spread the story of their generous and blessed deeds before me. And thus also, and for the same reason, if I would love God I must not only contemplate him as has been already said, but I must be familiar with the contemplation of his being and perfection. Earth through all her fair and glorious scenes must speak to me of him. The sacred page, with all its gracious words of teaching and promise, must speak to me of him. And I must listen with gladness, with a sense of my high privilege, and with joy must I commune with all the teachings of God to me, as I would commune with the words of a friend. This is the rational process.

But this, my friends, is not to say that "we hope we shall some time or other attain to the love of God," or that "we desire it," or that "it is difficult," or that "we fear we never shall reach it"—it is not saying, and saying this or that, in a sort of ideal or idle speculation; but it is doing something. It is seeking to feel the power of religion, as we seek to feel the power of other things—of the arts, of philosophy, of science, of astronomy, or of music—attentively, sedulously, with a careful use of opportunities, with a heedful regard to circumstances. The rational method, then, is the method of attention.

But, in the next place, the rational method is the method of association; or, in other words, it is a method which regards that great law of the mind the law of association. It pays regard to places, and times, and seasons, and moods of mind. It is partly an indirect method. It is putting ourselves in the way of obtaining a sense of religion.

The direct effort is to be valued for all that it is worth. And its value, indeed, is such that it is indispensable. Certainly, where the religious character is to be formed after our arrival at the period of adult years, periodical and private meditation and prayer seem to be essential aids. There is much to learn and much to overcome, and there should be definite seasons and direct efforts for these purposes. But it would be irrational to make these seasons and efforts the only means. If we should attempt to form a friendship for a human being by such a series of fixed and direct contemplations alone, it is easy to see that they would be very likely to be injurious, to create in our minds a set of repulsive or irksome associations with the human being in question, however amiable and excellent he might be. It would require the effect of many indirect influences to blend with these, and give them their proper character. So in the cultivation of a devotional spirit, it is not safe to trust to prayers and meditations *alone*.

Many good and wise men, in their writings, have recommended that the most special heed be given to those visitations of tender and solemn emotion, those touches of holy sensibility, those breathings of the Spirit of all grace which steal into the heart unsolicited, and offer their heavenly aid unsought. Let not him who would catch the sacred fervour of piety, venture to neglect these gracious intimations. Let him not neglect to put himself in the way of receiving them. Let him not willingly invade the holy sabbath hours with business or pleasure, or forsake the assemblies where good men meditate and pray, or resist the touching signs of nature's beauty or decline, or turn away from the admonition of loneliness and silence, when they sink deep into the heart. Or, if he does turn away, and avoid, and resist all this, let him not say, that he seeks or desires the good gift of the grace of God, the gift of light, and love, and holy joy.

Finally, the rational method is a method of consistency. Religious feeling, to be itself rational, and to be rationally sought, must not be expected to spring up as the result of anything else than the whole character. You desire to feel the power of religion. Do not expect, do not desire, to feel it, but as an impression upon your whole mind and heart, the general tone and tenor of all your sentiments and affections, the consenting together of your reflections, and actions, and habits. If you feel it as some peculiar thing, something singular in you, and technical in your very idea of it, as something apart from your ordinary self; if it is either a flame of the imagination, or a warmth of the affections, or a splendour of sentiment—one of them alone, and not all of them together—it will certainly lead you astray: it will be but a wavering and treacherous light. It may appear to you very bright. It may lead you to think well of yourself; far better than you ought to think. But it will be only a glaring taper, instead of the true light of life.

An irrational fervour is often found to stand in direct contrast to the rest of the character; to general ignorance, to want of moral refinement and delicacy, and of daily virtue. There is not only a zeal without knowledge, but there is a zeal which seems to thrive exactly in proportion to the want of knowledge; that bursts out from time to time, like a flame from thick smoke, instead of shining with any clear radiance and steady light. But it is the distinctive mark of rational feeling, that it rises gradually, and steadily gains strength, like the spreading of daylight upon the wakening earth. Hence, it rises slowly; and no one should be discouraged at small beginnings; and no one should expect or wish to rush into the full flow of religious sensibility at once.

I repeat it; this sensibility, if rational, must be felt as the spirit of the whole character: and he would do well to tell us nothing of his joys, of whom nothing can be told concerning his virtues, his self-denials, his general and growing improvement, the holy habits and heavenly graces of his character and life. Dost thou love good men, and pity bad men; is thy heart touched with all that is generous and lovely around us; is thine eye opened to all that is like God in his creatures and works? Then, and not till then, am I prepared to hear of thy love to God. Dost thou indeed love that great and kind Being? Dost thou indeed love that intrinsic, infinite, eternal, inexpressible beauty and glory of the divine perfection? Then, truly, art thou pre-

pared rightly to love all who bear his image, and to pity and pray for all who bear it not; then does thy social and religious sensibility flow on in one stream, full and entire, steady and constant—a living stream—a stream like that which floweth fresh, full, perennial, eternal, at the right hand of God!

My brethren, it *is* constant: so far, at least, as anything human can bear that character; it *is* constant. He who will rationally cultivate the sense of religion, both directly and indirectly, and as the consent and tendency of all his habits, may be just as certain of feeling it, as he is certain of loving his friend, his child, his chief interest. It is one of the irrational aspects of the *common* religious sensibility, that its possessors have usually spoken of it as if it were totally uncertain whether, on a given occasion, they should feel it or not. They have gone to church, they have gone to their private devotions with a feeling, as if it were to be decided, not by the habits of their own minds, but by some doubtful interposition of divine grace, whether they were to enjoy a sense of religion or not. But, my friends, nothing can be more certain to him who will rationally, heartily, and patiently, cultivate the religious sensibilities of his soul, than that he shall, on every suitable occasion, feel them. It is to him no matter of distressing doubt and uncertainty. He knows in whom he has believed. He knows in what he has confided. He knows, by sure experience, that as certainly as the themes of religion pass before him, they will, physical infirmity only excepted, arouse him to the most intense and delightful exercise of all his affections. He is sure—when the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ is presented before him—he is like Paul, sure that he shall enter into it. Not that this is any boasting assurance of the devoted Christian. God forbid! He knows his weakness. But he knows that, by the very laws of the divine goodness and grace, if he will be faithful, no good thing shall be wanting to him.

Christian brethren! we hear much in these days about excitement. Why, every prayer—of a Christian at once perfectly rational, and perfectly devoted—every prayer is an excitement; and every religious service, every sermon, is an excitement as great as he can well bear; and every day's toil of virtue, and contemplation of piety, is a great and glorious excitement. Excitements! Is a man never to be moved by his religion but when some flood of emotion is sweeping through society—when agitation, and disorder, and confusion are on every side of him? Is it only when the tenor of quiet life, the pursuits of industry, the pleasures of relaxation are all broken up, that he is to feel the power of religion? I do not say that this is anybody's theory; but if this is the fact that results from any form of religious teaching, then I ask, for what end was the whole tenor of life—for what end were the pursuits of industry and the pleasures of society ordained? For what was the whole trial of life—so exquisitely moral, so powerfully spiritual—for what was it appointed, if the seasons for obtaining religious impressions are so ordered by human interference, that they come only in idleness, disorder, and a derangement of the whole system of life! Excitements in religion! Are they to be things occasional, and separated by the distance of years? Is a man to be excited about religion only in a certain month, or in the winter; and when that month, or that winter is past—yes, when all nature is bursting into life, and beauty, and songs of

praise—is the religious feeling of the people to be declining into worse than wintry coldness and death? Is this religion?—the religion whose path shineth brighter and brighter to the perfect day?

Let us have excitements in religion, but then let them be such as may be daily renewed, as never need to die away. Any excitement in society that can bear this character, I would heartily go along with. The Christian religion, I am sure, was designed powerfully to excite us; nothing on earth so much—nothing in heaven more. It was designed to arouse our whole nature, to enrapture our whole affection, to kindle in us a flame of devotion, to transport us with the hope and foretaste of heaven. But its excitements, if they be like those that appeared in the great teacher, are to be deep, sober, strong, and habitual. Such excitements may God ever grant us; not periodical, but perpetual; not transient, but enduring; not for times and seasons only, but for life; not for life only, but for eternity!

ON INDIFFERENCE TO RELIGION.

1 PETER i. 17: "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear."

I HAVE lately spoken to you of religious insensibility. I propose now to address myself to the case of religious indifference. It is a case which differs from the former, though the word may seem to import nearly the same thing; and it differs in this respect—that it is held by him to whom it appertains to be capable of some defence. A want of feeling in religion is one thing, and it is a thing which a man often regrets; he never, perhaps, boasts of it. But a want of all interest about religion is another thing. It is a position which a man sometimes voluntarily assumes to himself, which is preliminary with him to the very grounds on which religious feeling is claimed, and which, therefore, he defends. He has not got so far as to allow the demand for feeling to be brought home to his conscience; he has stopped short at the threshold of the whole subject; he denies that he is bound to take any particular interest in it; and is proud, it may be, of his independence, and exemption from that great claim. Religious insensibility, then, admits and regrets its deficiency, or acknowledges, at least, that such regret would be proper; religious indifference does not admit so much; it defends itself.

We have not, therefore, as on the former subject, merely to point out causes, but we have now to combat reasons. We have to argue with those who maintain that they have reasons for not taking any deep interest, or decided part, in religion.

What the nature of the reasons is, will appear in making another distinction. For there is a distinction to be made, as between insensibility and indifference, so also between indifference and positive criminality. The plea of crime, or of vice in general, is, that passion is so strong, and the temptation so great, that there is hardly power to resist: a plea, however, which was never made without the consciousness of guilt, and the strong contradiction of the offender's own mind. But indifference says to the earnest and solemn preaching of the gospel, "I am very well as I am now. I do not need religion; I do not *feel* the need of it; my *mind* acknowledges no such want. The world suffices me, life satisfies me, without religion; I am very well as I am now." This may be called, perhaps, the practical apology of indifference; the apology which a man finds, or conceives that he finds, in the state of his mind. But indifference has also a theoretical defence; it shelters itself, sometimes, under the apology of a limited creed. It says to the earnest and solemn preacher of the gospel, "I do not believe as you do; those moral dangers, those fearful doctrines, those dreadful warnings, which are preached to the people, I do not believe in: if I did, I should be bound, I admit, to be

aroused to anxiety and earnestness." The neglecters of religion are often found taking advantage of the controversies that prevail, and they say, "We do not know about these things; some hold to one thing, and some to another; even learned men differ; and we do not know, in fact, whether anything is true."

These are the two classes of reasons for religious indifference, and I intend to consider them in order. But let us dwell a moment longer on the case itself, that, in arguing on this subject, we may fight, not as one that beateth the air.

It is not indifference to certain circumstances in religion—to certain creeds, to certain forms, or to certain measures and enterprises in religion, against which, I wish now to contend; but it is against that indifference which is vital. It is against indifference to the religious care and improvement of one's-self. It is against that indifference which refuses to meditate, or read, or pray, or watch, or strive for the guidance, keeping, restraint, and salvation of the soul—an indifference which holds these very terms "keeping and salvation of the soul," to be out of its sphere entirely. It is against that indifference which has put on the almost impenetrable armour of settled habit and professed character; which is untouched by the most solemn appeals of the pulpit, because it says, "these are matters that I do not pretend to be zealous about;" or it is against the indifference, which, if moved for the moment, immediately relapses into the same old mood of mind, and says the same thing in effect, all the week through, and all the year round. It is against the indifference, whether of philosophy that is too wise, or fashion that is too frivolous, whether of wickedness that is too bold, or of worldliness that is too easy, to care for any of these things. Nay, more; it is against that indifference, which is not real; which assumes a garb for the sphere it moves in; which, while there really are deep reflections, and conscious wants, and thrilling solicitudes within, puts on a cold exterior towards religion, and consents to pass the foolish jest and the slighting remark on this subject, because such is the tone of the society in which it moves. Not a little is there of this assumed indifference in the world.

And where the indifference is real, I do not say that it always appears in a very manifest or fully developed and complete form. Moral states of mind seldom are very definite or complete. Religious indifference has many shades, and degrees, and disguises, and it defends itself by various, and, sometimes, almost unconscious and even contradictory reasonings; so that I cannot, on any account, hold myself responsible for the supposition that it is always one obvious and palpable thing. It is enough to say that there is, and is acknowledged to be, a large class of persons in the Christian world, in whom there are tendencies either to the neglect of all external religion, to forms, to public worship of every kind,—or, what is much more serious, to the neglect of all personal interest, of all vital concern with the subject. They do not consider this as a matter with which they have anything to do. Business belongs to them, or professional labours belong to them; and to think about these things, to inquire, to read, to take an interest about things of a worldly nature,—all this is with them a part of the recognised object, and plan, and pursuit of life. But religion has no such place in their thoughts—not even in their

sabbath thoughts. It is not an object to them at any time. It is not an interest with them ever. They care for none of these things.

The pertinency of my text to this case, I may now observe, and to the course of remark which I contemplate, lies in this; that the demand for a very serious, and even anxious concern in religion, is there supported on the ground of a very limited creed. "If ye call on the Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." My argument with religious indifference then, from the spirit of my text, is to the following effect: that which is certainly true in life, and in the mind—that which almost every man believes to be true in the creed, or in the Bible—and in fine, that which the sceptic denies to be true,—each and all of these are considerations and grounds for the deepest concern about religion.

Our text says, and it says to all without exception, "live in the present world in fear;" *i. e.* not in slavish dread, of course, but in a just fear, in a pious reverence towards God, and faithful guardianship over the conscience. And it says this concerning the whole of life; "pass the time of your sojourning here" in this wisdom and piety. And then, as an argument for thus living, it lays down these simple positions —undeniable by all but unbelievers, and generally admitted even by them—"if ye call on the Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth every man's work," live thus.

Let us then look at this indifference in its stronghold of negations—its pleas, that it does *not* believe so much as others, or, that it does *not* need religion. Let us see if what every man must admit, as a matter of experience, and what almost every man does admit as a matter of faith, nay, and if what any man may please to *deny* as a matter of faith, does not afford an argument for the utmost religious consideration, solicitude, and sensibility.

My first concern is, with what every man must admit as a matter of experience and of fact. Let us then direct our attention to life and to the mind—the scene of events, and the being who experiences them —and let us direct our attention to them first in connexion with each other.

Whenever a man looks around him, there are certain things which he must acknowledge. He is a living man, and there is a scene of life, there are events and ordinances of life for him to pass through—events and ordinances of life which he must pass through, let his character be what it may. It is striking, indeed, to think that every mind, however reckless and trifling, must fall upon all the trials, the allotments, the fates of this mortal and momentous existence. The boast of health is no shield against disease, nor the frivolity of pleasure against sadness and sorrow. Avarice must come to the hour of utter destitution, and pride to the hour of utter prostration. How powerful a call to religion, then, is life itself! How powerfully does it forbid all indifference! Life, I repeat, with all that makes it up, with all its great and solemn ordinations of toil, and endurance, and vicissitude, and sickness, and affliction; with all its periods—of glowing youth, and sober manhood, and thoughtful age; life, with its trembling ties of friendship, its holy rites of marriage, its sympathies of kindred, and its homes of affection; with its attendance on sickness and languish-

ment, and its last sad offices to the beings of its love and companionship—life, I repeat, the body's frailty and decay, the soul's conflict, the mind's discipline, the heart's solemn monitress—Oh! who can look with indifference to the Ordainer of such a lot? Who can live and die in perfect unconcern with regard to the Being who has made him to live and die? I confess that, to my own mind, it seems inevitable that I should be moved in some way, yes, religiously moved, by this experience of life. If I were impious, I should rail at it; if I were devout, I should humbly submit to its discipline; but not to feel at all! —I must be a stock or a stone! Life—by every joy, by every sorrow of it! life is no neutral scene; and how can—how *can* he who experiences it be neutral?

Surely, I take the lowest ground of supposition; and yet I demand —since I *cannot* demand religious execration and wrath—I demand the loftiest height of piety. A living man—take that bare supposition, which is yet something beyond that of mere existence—a *living* man, I repeat, should be a religious man. I said not, a living animal, but a man,—that takes not, and cannot take life as a beast does; that sees and must see in it something of deeper import;—and yet of an import which nothing but religion can fully comprehend and fathom. For religion is at once the only proper end of life, and its only sufficient and satisfactory interpreter. And I do aver, both for the immediate and the ultimate reason, that he who comes to reflect deeply on what he is, and what is around him, upon the world without, and the world within him, cannot get along with any satisfaction or comfort, unless he takes the guidance of religion. I have said that he must be religious in some way; but I further insist that to get along with any satisfaction, he must be religious in the right way. I do say, and fearlessly say, that he who should reflect thoroughly and deeply on life, could no more think of living without God in the world than he could think of living without the bounty of nature; that prayer would be as necessary to him as food; and the faith of his soul as indispensable as the sight of his eyes.

I know the strength of this language, and what may be alleged against it. I know that there are men of general integrity and worth, who, with a sort of amiable ease or indolence of spirit, say, that "they are well enough as they are." I think, too, that I understand the meaning of this language, and I distinctly see, as I apprehend, that it does not go to the depth—no, nor anywhere near to the depth, of their nature and their wants. They are "well enough" in a worldly sort—well enough, because they are comfortable and prosperous. But will all this meet the great, the general, and the urgent want of the human heart? Does the heart never ask anything that riches cannot give? Does it never sigh for a peace that the world cannot give? I know not what the worldly heart may answer; but this I know, that some of the most bitter complainers that ever poured out the language of satire, and scorn, and disgust upon this world, are precisely the most worldly beings in it. No, the world does not satisfy the worldly, and they know it. How is it possible that it should do so, if the mind of a worldly man be still a mind;—if there be anything in him that can be called a mind?

Why, even the senses range far beyond this world. Fix thine eye

upon a star in the infinite distance and depth of heaven. What beam is that which visiteth thee from afar? If I were to pause now for the brief space of only eight minutes, a ray from the sun would, in that brief interval, have traversed almost a hundred millions of miles to reach us! What beam, then, is that which visiteth thee from far, far beyond the precincts of solar day? Through the slow revolutions of years—I speak the astronomical fact;—for aught thou knowest before thou wast created—I speak the astronomical doubt;—for aught thou knowest, before the world was created, that ray of light left its native seats, and through distances awful and inconceivable, through the silent lapse and the slow revolution of years unknown, that ray of light has been travelling onward and onward, till it has fallen on thy poor weak sense. Now, follow it back, on the line of its immeasurable progress, to its original sphere, its home which it hath left to teach thee—and does thy mind stop there? No: nor there, nor anywhere does it stop, but beyond and beyond, to infinity, to eternity it wanders. And can that mind say that it is "well enough," in a little earthly comfort and a few worldly possessions? Can the soul, that spans the universe, and measures ages, be content with a grain of sand upon this shore of time? No. Hold thou the measureless ocean in the hollow of thy hand, and then mayest thou curb the swellings of thought, passion, and desire, to that narrow compass. Garner up the treasures of infinite worlds in thy coffer, and then mayest thou lock up in that coffer the affections that are expanding to the grasp of infinity. No, mistaken soul, thine eye spans the arch of heaven—thy soaring thought ariseth to the eternal stars; thine aim must be broad and boundless as those pathways of heaven. As surely as thou livest, thou must live religiously, virtuously, wisely. Life is an argument for piety. Sense is a guide to faith. Time should bear our thoughts, as it is bearing our souls, to eternity!

But there are other witnesses to be summoned in this argument besides events and their unavoidable impressions. There are distinct wants in the mind. Amidst the cares and conflicts of this life, there are certain ultimate objects in which all men are interested. One of these objects is happiness. I say, then—I may say to every man, however irreligious—thou wouldst be happy.

Thou wouldst be happy. When thou art happiest, still something is wanting;—and thou wouldst be happier. When thy thought is brightest, a shade, like the shadow of a cloud upon the fairest landscape, cometh over thee, and thou wouldst thy thoughts were brighter. When thy possessions are most abundant, there is yet a want in thy mind; and thou wouldst have a more satisfying fulness within. Is there anything but what is all-perfect, and infinite, and immortal? But the all-perfect, and the infinite, and the immortal, belong to the province of religion; and if thou wouldst find them, thou must find them in her glorious sphere.

But again, I say, thou wouldst be happy. Thou wouldst be happy—ay, thou wouldst indeed be so when thou art *not* happy, for what is so intolerable as misery? Thou wouldst be happy when thou art sick; when thou art sorrowful; when thou art bereaved. When thou art cast down and almost crushed by some of the thousand nameless burthens of life, thou wouldst be happy. And dost thou know, canst

thou conceive of anything that can make thee happy in these circumstances but religion?

But again, in regard to this matter of happiness, I may say to every one, something troubles you at one time or another,—something is the matter with you. What is it that aileth thee, O never-satisfied man? What is it? What is it that takes from the joy of life when at the fullest; or disturbs the clear and overflowing fountain, or imbitters its waters? What is it? You tell me of events, of annoyances, of a troublesome world, of the vexations of life. Do you not know that life and the world are the reflection of yourself—the image without of the reality within? What is it, then? Ah! it is evermore some unholy passion —pride, or envy, or sensual excess, or the workings of a selfish, ungenerous, ungrateful mind. A calm and self-governed temper, a benevolent gladness of spirit, the cheerfulness of a good conscience, the gentle affections of piety, would make every fountain of earthly good a fountain of real peace and happiness. Does any man deny this? Does the most confirmed sceptic or the boldest scorner deny it? Religion, then, above all other things, is commended to the desire of happiness. It comes near, it is adjunct to that great desire. It belongs to it as light to the eye that would see, as food to the hunger that would be satisfied. Deep, then, impatient, unquenchable as that desire is, strongly, unceasingly, eternally as it beats, like the pulse of existence in the human heart, so deeply, so strongly, so unceasingly, should the human heart be interested about that which alone can give it happiness: interested, not merely as in something future and far off, but as in something of present, pressing, instant concern. If the heart knew its own welfare, it would be so interested; and the very soul of youth would not burn with a love of unholy pleasures, so intense, but it would be quenched in the holy tears of that supplication, "Oh! satisfy me early with thy mercy, that I may be glad and rejoice in thee all my days."

Once more, and with regard to the wants of the mind, and the ultimate objects of life: if you are a reasonable being, you would improve. If you were a brute, you might neither know nor care anything for this. But if you are a reasonable being, you must desire to improve. You cannot stop at the point you have now reached, and be satisfied. You would, you must, go onward; and you never will come to the point—it is not in your nature ever to come to the point—from which you would not go onward! A thousand ages of improvement would find you still asking to go onward. Can you then be indifferent to that religion whose sphere is eternity?

Indeed, my brethren, how much religion might do for us—not, alas! how much it does, but how much it might do for us—in this matter of improvement—how much not only to subdue the passions, and control the conduct, but to soften the heart, and the very manners—how much to unfold the genius, to develop the powers of the mind—how much to cheer and quicken the soul, to give it courage, to inspire it with a pure and noble ambition to rise to true greatness—how much of all this religion might do in the work of moral culture and of early education, I fear we but little consider, and but poorly comprehend. And yet a very plain argument might show it. If we would train an artist to excellence, we place before him perfect models. If we would raise any one to the loftiest virtue, we direct him constantly to fill his mind with

the noble image, the divine idea of it. Prayer carries us at once to the Infinite Original, and image of all goodness. Piety, meekness, and forgiveness, bear us to the company of Jesus. In heartily communing with such objects as religion places before us—with the love of God, with the simple gospel of Christ, with his sacred precepts, with his divine example,—it is impossible but that everything good or godlike in us should improve. And the man who says that he desires to improve, and yet is indifferent to such a religion, presents a solecism in morals as great as he would do who, professing the desire to be rich, should turn away from the wealthiest mine, or the most gainful traffic.

And does a mind that turns away from this great opportunity, say that it is well enough as it is? Would it satisfy you, if your child, indolently neglecting his studies, should say, that he is well enough as he is? And will the great Giver of life, and law-giver of the heart, be satisfied with such an answer from you. Is it what he reasonably expects from such a nature as he has given you? Not advancing, not improving, not using any of those principles of improvement which are essentially the principles of religion; and yet well enough? A stock, or a stone, were it endowed with consciousness, might say that! An animal, whose distinctive nature it is never to improve, might say that! But for a man to say that—for a man—neglecting the sabbath, neglecting his Bible, neglecting prayer—to say that he is well enough in that condition—what better is it than the fancied well-being of insanity? Nay, better for a man, than that fancied well-being, provided he clings to the delusion—better were it for him if he had never been born.

I have now considered what may be called the practical apology for religious indifference, and must defer the consideration of the theoretical defence till our next meditation. The practical apology, I have said, is one which a man finds in the state of his own mind, and which is briefly expressed in the declaration, that he does not want anything of religion; that he is well enough without it.

To me, I must confess, this state of mind is one of the greatest of mysteries. We hear much of the mysteries of religion, and the negligent and indifferent are the very persons, perhaps, who complain most of mysteries, and even make of them an apology for their indifference. But I confess that they themselves present in their own persons anomalies and mysteries, that go farther than all others to stagger and confound, not only faith, but reason itself. It is the most inconceivable thing in human experience, that any man, with the feelings and reflections of a man, should be able to take and hold a position of absolute indifference, with regard to a subject, so all-embracing and intimately connected with him as religion. If I did not know the fact to be so, if it were not a matter of confession, and even of boast with some, I should scarcely be able to believe it. No testimony, I am ready to say, nothing but confession, could convince me of it. For I do not know what the life of a mind is, that can be thus estranged from religion. Occupying a point of space amidst infinite systems of beauty and harmony —a breathing hour of time between the eternity past and the eternity to come; seeing clear manifestations of boundless power and wisdom on every side in the whole creation, and yet ignorant of ten thousand mysteries, that fill that creation from its lowest depth to its topmost height; a mind seeing this, and feeling this, and tried, too, with the ten

thousand events of life—ay, and suffering, often-times sinking, and yet at other times soaring and aspiring to things infinite and immortal;—that mind, I say—what is it? What is it made of, and what is it made for, if it does not sometimes stretch out the hand of entreaty for a guidance and support, for a voice of teaching, and a solution of mysteries beyond this world? Let it be so, that right, and rectitude, and obligation, and duty, were all out of the question: yet where is curiosity? Where is the questioning that belongs to a thoughtful and intelligent creature amidst a scene like this? It is a mystery, I will not say of iniquity; but it is a mystery of dulness, surpassing all comprehension. Oh! men of this world, whosoever ye are!—O! men who are altogether of this world!—talk not to us of our mysteries, till ye have cleared up your own mysteries. A mind, insensible to all the highest interests of a mind—a mind, bereft of all the attributes of a thinking, inquiring, suffering, unsatisfied being—what is it, I ask again? Is it matter, or spirit?—Is it an earthly creature? No; for its thoughts stretch beyond the earth. Is it a heavenly being? No; for it cares not for heaven. What is it then, and where is its place? Where, in the universe of things, is its place?

Ah! how surely is that out of its place for which no position can be found, in the eye of reason or of common sense, or even of imagination! Let him who has wandered, whether in the ways of gain, or of philosophy, or of fashion, to the verge of that shadowy region, that shore of spectral illusions, that world of spiritual death and mental chaos, where nothing is right, nor reasonable, nor sure, nor safe; let him start back, as from the gulph of annihilation, and return to the way of life. Let him turn back to the solid ground of faith, of reason, of wisdom. Let him enter upon the path that is bright with truth and virtue—the path that shineth brighter and brighter to the perfect day.

ON INDIFFERENCE TO RELIGION.

1 PETER i. 17: "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear."

I HAVE spoken, in my last discourse from these words, of the practical apology for religious indifference; the apology, that is to say, which a man finds in his own heart, and which he expresses when he says, that "he does not need religion—that he is very well as he is now." I have appealed to life, to the love of happiness, to the desire for improvement; I have appealed to the mind, nay, and the senses, to say whether this can be so: and they have all answered, and truly answered, as I think, that this grand practical assumption of religious indifference is utterly mistaken, untrue, unfounded in the nature of things, and of the mind.

I shall now proceed to consider the theoretical defence of religious indifference; the apology, that is to say, of a limited creed. Let us see, then, whether the most limited creed still is not ample and solemn enough to overshadow with awe, the most negligent mind that takes shelter under it.

If, says the apostle, "ye call on the Father." Here is recognised the first article of almost universal belief that there is a God! It is indeed the first article of every creed—the foundation principle of every religion; it is, as we call it, the first truth and the plainest truth; and we utter it in common words and tones, such as we give to all other truth, till the danger is, that all its sublimity and mysteriousness will be lost in its certainty, and familiarity, and constant repetition. But what a truth is it, and what mind that thinks of it can be indifferent? That there is a God, and with such attributes—eternal, but existing in time; infinite, but existing in space, all around us; all-creating, himself uncreated; all-sustaining, himself independent; all-seeing, himself invisible; all-comprehending, himself incomprehensible—whose mind that thinks of it is not lost, is not overwhelmed in this truth? To acknowledge this, and not to be religious, is an utter, and almost inconceivable contradiction of ideas. It is a moral absurdity, which no language can express. It is like saying there is light, and not seeing it; there is danger, and not fearing it; there is sublimity, and not reverencing; there is glory, and not admiring; there is beauty or loveliness, and not loving it. It is more—for it is saying that there is a Being to whom all these ideas belong, without measure or end, and not entertaining any correspondent emotion.

There is no thought which we can admit to our minds concerning God but it is a solemn thought. If he dwelt at an infinite distance

from us; if his presence never came near to us; if he never had any concern with us; if the world had formed itself and us by certain self-producing powers of its own; if we, and our humble sphere, were too insignificant to be noticed; still that atheism in the thoughts leaves to us the conception of a Being, though distant, yet so wonderful, that the bare idea of him must strike us with awe; that the bare idea of him might be enough to arrest the most careless mind, and to fix it for ever in the profoundest admiration. But, suppose that the doctrine concerning that great Being came nearer to us—suppose that God were the actual Maker of this world and our Maker, but had left all to itself, as some seem to imagine, and took no further account of the work of his hands; yet how much does even that supposition leave us to awaken a religious devoutness? Even then we should have it to consider that we dwell where God has been! that we dwell amidst the tokens of a mighty presence passed away! that every hill and mountain lifted up before us the dread monuments of departed omnipotence! What a thought might that be, to strike the mind with the profoundest awe? He who should wander amidst some silent city of the mighty dead, amidst broken columns and falling temples, and feel no serious nor sublime emotion, would not be guilty of such unpardonable inconsistency or dulness, as the moral being who acknowledges, in any sense, that there is a God, and feels no religious awe.

But how solemn is the truth, and what words shall declare it,—that this awful and glorious Being is not in the infinite height, nor in the unfathomable depth only, nor in the immeasurable distance where thought and imagination have never wandered; but that God is here also!—here in all the majesty and glory that fill the heavens with his splendours? "Oh, God!" should we not exclaim, if we felt this—"God, who art present with us! help our unbelief and indifference." Indifference! my brethren,—and the admission that there is a God!—what power of imagination can make such things to coexist—to dwell together in the same world, in the same soul! And yet, alas! they are found to meet in the experience of thousands.

But I pass to another part of what may be considered as the general belief. "If ye call upon the Father"—this implies the first part—"who without respect of persons judgeth every man's work." Here is recognised the universal obligation of duty, and the certainty of retribution.

Now, duty—to consider this in the first place—duty is, in its very nature, something that admits of no neutrality, and, consequently, of no indifference. To whatever it applies, it imparts a peculiar character: it binds the most indifferent things with a bond, strong as the Almighty will. But duty is, at the same time, a principle of boundless application. There is not a thought, nor a word, nor a deed, but duty has a relation to it. There is no place of our abode but duty is there with its claims. No view is there which we can take of it but is of very deep import. Its sanction is an infinite authority; its residence is in the immortal part; its issues go forth to eternity; it is the dignity, and happiness, and perfection of our nature; it is the end of our being. If it is failed of, what misery is the consequence! And yet it is as easy to fail of it, as to take any of a thousand devious paths rather than the only one that is right.

There is no class of our duties that are so readily acknowledged, as those which are relative—those which we owe to one another. These are, indeed, first principles of the doctrine of Christ. But they are held also to be the first principles of reason. They are the faith and boast of unbelievers! To be just, generous, and kind; to have a benevolent regard to the best welfare of others; to be honest, disinterested, and useful; these are obligations which it would be thought unnatural, unpardonable, to deny. To admit and practise them, is thought to be the least that we can do. And yet, after all, how momentous an affair is it rightly to discharge the very least of these universally acknowledged duties! How rare is it to see a perfect, or even a very high exemplification of the faithful and friendly offices that men owe to one another! How difficult is it to preserve our conduct from offence, our lips from guile, our hearts from unworthy feelings! How strait is the path even of honesty, of friendship, of natural affection! Who does not deviate? Who does not require a strict guard? The best, the kindest, the most faithful err, and have occasion to mourn over their folly, their carelessness, or their passions.

And then there are others for whom society mourns. How do all the relations of life bleed under one cruel infliction! How easy is it to touch some point in the delicate system of social connexions that shall send contagion and suffering through the whole! How prevalent is evil! How prolific, how diffusive is vice!

Or, to take a higher view of these relative duties, if we are bound to regard each other's welfare, then, surely, that which is the highest and the most permanent—the future, the eternal. And this view presents society before us, as one vast association, whose great concern is, to form its members to religious virtue, to piety, to the love of God, to the spirit of heaven. It teaches us that our greatest duty is to the soul; our most momentous influence is on the character. Now it need not be said what fidelity, what circumspection, what care, what perfection of social life, ought to flow from the simple acknowledgment of these most simple and unquestionable principles and duties.

But our relation to futurity is not that merely of an influence exerted on others, but it is the more solemn relation of an influence, because it is a deeper influence, exerted on ourselves. All is not to end here indeed; but we believe, moreover, that what is to go onward is *retribution;* that while the good have everything to hope, the bad have everything to fear; that every man has enough to hope or to fear—to occupy many deep and weighty thoughts. We believe that our actions, when committed, are not for ever done with; that the record of life, as it passes, is sealed up for a future inspection; that these days of our mortal existence are to be subjected, not merely to that partial review of conscience with which we sometimes close them, but to the tribunal of that great Being who gave to conscience all its power. We expect the day when we shall stand before the judgment-seat; when the book, —ah! how firmly closed against all inspection now!—when the book of our experience will be opened, and we shall be judged out of it. How serious is that prospect! Who can look to that future scene with indifference? Who, while the time of his sojourning here is hastening away, will not pass it in wisdom, and sobriety, and godly fear? Oh! there is enough in the bare, the indefinite possibilities of a future ac-

count to fill us with apprehension. Our experience tells us that the retribution which awaits the sinful soul cannot be a slight matter; it cannot be a slight matter now; it cannot now be pushed aside by the hand of indifference. But what shall be that great consummation of the work of conscience, its last infliction, its gnawing worm and unquenchable fire, futurity—the unknown, the awful futurity—alone can reveal; but let us believe, that one word of revelation from that future world would break up our indifference for ever.

But our belief—*i. e.* the common belief—goes still farther. Each of us probably believes, not only that he has a rational nature, and not only that this is bound by the obligation of duty, and to the certainty of retribution, but that this soul is immortal; that there is within him an emanation from the Divinity—which has a being commensurate with that of the Divinity itself—which will live while God exists. What an amazing connexion is this with the future! What thoughts does it suggest for each one of us to meditate upon. "This soul within me," —may you say—"so familiar, so endeared to me by its earthly experience—*my* soul—*myself*, am to live for ever and ever! Ages will crowd on ages, and yet I shall live. Unbounded systems will revolve —the eternal fires that enlighten them may grow old and die away, and revive again, and kindle their light anew,—and yet the morning of my endless being will hardly have broken around me! Time shall be no longer, and duration shall pass all thought and measurement; yet when ten thousand boundless revolutions of ages are accomplished, and thousands and millions more are added to them, I shall live, and yet look forward to eternity! O, poor and vanishing life! O, ye toys of a summer's day, wealth, and fame, and pleasure!—where are ye now!" And yet, brethren, I have seen a man who could be serious in gathering up this perishing dust; yes, I have seen him serious; and anxious with the fear of losses; but he thought it too much to be serious in religion; too much to be anxious for his immortal being! Yes, I have seen him meditate—I have seen him tremble—I have seen him labouring—labouring on through life, with many and wearisome cares; but he cannot meditate, he cannot tremble, he cannot labour for his soul! His indifference to what is spiritual and immortal can be equalled, I was about to say, by nothing; and yet there is one thing to equal it; and that is, his eagerness for every passing phantom of this perishing world. His indifference, and all his indifference centres in the only point where his essential interest lies, where his essential being is treasured up—in his soul? and he never saw the day—it is no fiction, it is reality that I utter—he never saw the day, when he could think so much of his soul, when he could labour so much for it, as he can for the most trifling addition to his worldly gains!

But to escape the charge of an inconsistency so palpable as that which is implied in the acknowledgment of any religious truth, and a total religious indifference, there may be some who are prepared to go farther than we have yet supposed. There may be some who will say "we believe nothing in regard to religion, and therefore we are bound to feel nothing, and to care nothing, about it."

I am not sure but I have now presented a case which makes indifference more shocking and monstrous than any other that can be supposed. Let me state it to you in terms. It is common, and it is thought de-

corous, to repeat a creed in a very deliberate and serious manner. He who says, "I believe in God, I believe in Jesus Christ, I believe in the life everlasting," is expected to do it solemnly. But let us listen to the no-creed of the sceptic. Let a man take his stand beyond the boundaries of all religious truth; beyond the boundaries of light, where all is darkness, before and around him; let him stand there, dimly seen, a cursing spirit, on the borders, to his view, of eternal night; let him lift up his hand to those heavens shining with ten thousand harmonious systems of worlds—and amidst the ten thousand voices of Nature, let him say, "I believe in nothing but in darkness, and desolation, and death; I believe in no God; I believe in no Saviour; I believe in no hope hereafter: death is an eternal sleep; the Bible is a fiction; the adoration of a God is but the dream of bigots and enthusiasts!"—let him say this!—but can he say it without trembling—can he say it without pain, without regret, without one struggle to hold on to the last parting hope of existence? If he can, yet let him know that no one can hear him without trembling; and so awful a spectacle would it be, if a man should thus stand before us, that it would not be strange to us, if the voices of nature, if the mutterings of distant thunder should answer back, and speak in the name of that awful and omnipresent One whose being he denies.

But there may be some men, nay, there are men in this very community, reckless enough in their fearful consistency, and strong enough in their insane courage, to aver that they can say all this without horror or regret. If so, let us see what sort of men they are that can make this averment: let us make a discrimination here, for at this point it becomes necessary. There are, then, two kinds of unbelievers; the intellectual and refined, and the sensual and brutish unbeliever.

The intellectual and refined unbeliever is one who has usually become such from some peculiarity of mind, or misfortune of education, from some misapprehension of revealed religion or mysticism about Nature, which prevent him, as I think, from feeling the force of plain evidence. The difficulty lies in his mind, and it is a difficulty which he most sincerely regrets. He wishes he could believe. Perhaps he does believe, almost without knowing it. Perhaps he does believe more than he imagines. Perhaps he embraces almost every important truth of the gospel, while he thinks himself obliged, by the laws of evidence, to reject its supernatural origin. But the point which I am concerned at present to insist upon is this, that the intellectual and refined unbeliever always regrets his unbelief. He feels, beyond expression, the wants of an intellectual nature, and he sighs with every aspiration of a burdened soul—in silence, and sadness, and bitterness of heart—he sighs for relief. Now this man is not at ease with regard to religion. Indifference to the subject is the last thing of which to accuse him. He is as far from indifference, perhaps, as the most faithful and devoted Christian. And I would beseech such a one, if I addressed any such, never to suffer himself carelessly to consider his state of mind as an apology for religious negligence. His is the last state of mind that can fairly furnish such an apology. He is bound by every rational consideration to be an anxious seeker of the truth and of the true way. He is not, it is true, in a condition most favourable to improvement; but he is in a condition that utterly and for ever forbids all indifference.

It is, therefore, the sensual unbeliever only that can be indifferent, or that can pretend to have any reason for being so. And here it may seem that we are stopped and foreclosed altogether from proceeding any farther with argument or expostulation. But if it be so, let us stand a moment, and see if we can help standing aghast at the object that is presented before us. It is a being; it is a moral being—*we* know it, if he does not—his every effort to defend himself proves that he is moral—it is a moral being—it is a man. Look at him. He is a moral being and a man, and declares—this is the supposition—God forbid that it should often be reality; but this is the supposition—he declares that he does not believe *any* thing religious to be true; that he does not wish it to be true; that he is persuaded that it is not true; and that he cares nothing about it. He declares that he *has* no deep intellectual wants of which other men talk; that he has no glorious aspirations which nothing but heaven can meet; that he has no high and generous affections, which nothing but virtue can satisfy; that all this about virtue and improvement, about hope and heaven, is a mistake, and a fancy, and a dream. He declares, finally, that the senses are to him everything; that he believes (to use the words of an unsexed female lecturer in some of our theatres)—that he believes in what he *sees*, and that is all he does believe in. Presumptuous and preposterous nonsense! as if thoughts in the mind, ay, and wants in the mind, were not things as really existing as the objects of vision: and our sceptic declares, moreover, that he seeks for nothing, hopes for nothing but the indulgences of sense, and that, to wallow in sensual pleasures all his life, and then die for ever, is all that he wants!

Let no one start at this representation, and say that it is all hypothesis, and that nobody ever felt thus; for *if* it be hypothesis—*if* no man ever felt thus—then there is not a being in the world that can protect his religious indifference under even the flimsiest garb of reason. There is no defence for religious indifference, unless it be found in that utter, appalling, revolting, self-damning scepticism. But suppose that scepticism to exist; that defence to be set up; that case represented to be reality; then I say, in fine, what a reality is it for a man to sit down with, in indifference! Gracious heavens! for a man to declare himself a brute, and to make that a reason for being unconcerned; to take refuge from the calls of religion among the herd of animals; to deny himself the very attributes of humanity, that he, a human being, may be at ease in his sins, his irreligion, and spiritual lethargy — why, what is it but to make an argument that carries with it its own strongest refutation? Truly such an argument for indifference ought to break it up for ever. The horror of having used it—though every other resort had failed—the very horror of having used it, like the last warning of death in the ear, should startle the self-indulgent sleeper from his repose, and never suffer him again to sink towards that fatal security!

But, my brethren—to add one word more, and more accordant with the situation of an assembly of professed believers—if the argument of scepticism is so fearful, surely the indifference of faith is, if possible, yet more so.

Not life, with all its teachings, not the love of happiness, not even the belief in a God, in duty, in retribution, in an immortal soul—no,

nor the denial of all these things, is so fearful, as it is, amidst the acknowledgment of such truths, to be unconcerned—to sleep amidst the calls of nature, of life and death, of time and eternity! Even scepticism, we have said, has cause to be distressed—to be overwhelmed with its gloomy doubts; but indifference, *with faith*, is a step beyond all—more rash, if possible, more heaven-defying than any other. There is a hope for it, indeed, which there is not for utter scepticism; but it is a hope amidst perils and threatenings. There is a salvation for it which utter unbelief rejects; but it must be salvation, if possible, from more aggravated sins. Yes, the light of truth is around this man, and the warning depths are beneath, but he sins on, and sleeps on—sleeps on, upon the very brink of destruction! What shall save him? What power shall interpose for his rescue? No hand of miracle will be stretched out to pluck him from that edge of peril and perdition. No power to save stirs within him, while he thus sleeps in security. What, then, *shall* save him? Consider it, I beseech you, if you be a negligent hearer; consider it, before it is too late. Surely indifference never saved any man: it has destroyed millions. Surely, everything must be wrong in him whom nothing will arouse, neither to righteousness, nor to the consciousness of wanting it, nor to the fear of consequences. The last hold upon such a man, *while* such, is lost; and futurity must awaken *him* to condemnation, whom the present cannot awaken to repentance, to prayer, and to the care of his soul.

But let me not, with such terms, close this meditation. Assailing religious indifference in its strongholds, as I have to-day, I have felt, and too naturally felt, perhaps, that my words were to fall, not on the tenderness of the human heart, but, as it were, on the scales of leviathan. But that tenderness—where is it not?—in what assembly is it not? My friends, I know—of many of you at least—I know that ye are not indifferent. Life *is* to you that moving scene which it is to every thoughtful and feeling mind. The Bible *is* to you the book of your faith and trust. Blessed trust! touching experience! and they are yours. No, ye are not indifferent. But then I beseech you, act not as if ye were so. Think it not enough to admit to-day that you ought to be interested in this great subject. Show that you *are* so, to-morrow, and every day. *Let it appear*, I entreat you, that ye are men who believe in your Bibles. Let your *life* give testimony to the GREAT PRINCIPLE which should guide you. In all things, show your fidelity to it. In business, be conscientious; in pleasure, temperate; in suffering, patient; in prosperity, thankful; in *all things religious*. If ye call on the Father; if here, in the holy sanctuary, and if, in the silence of your own dwellings, ye call on the Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear, in wisdom, in acts of piety, in works of righteousness.

THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION.

GALATIANS vi. 7: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

I UNDERSTAND these words, my brethren, as laying down, in some respects, a stricter law of retribution than is yet received even by those who are considered as its strictest interpreters. There is much dispute about this law at the present day; and there are many who are jealous, and very properly jealous, of every encroachment upon its salutary principles. But even those who profess to hold the strictest faith on this subject, and who, in my judgment, do hold a faith concerning what they call the infinity of man's ill-desert, that is warranted neither by reason nor scripture,—even they, nevertheless, do often present views of conversion, and of God's mercy, and of the actual scene of retribution, which, in my apprehension, detract from the wholesome severity of the rule by which we are to be judged. Their views may be strong enough, too strong; and yet not strict enough, nor impressive enough. Tell a man that he deserves to suffer infinitely, and I am not sure that it will, by any means, come so near his conscience as to tell him that he deserves to endure some small but specific evil. Tell him that he deserves an infinity of suffering, and he may blindly assent to it; it is a vast and vague something that presses upon his conscience, and has no edge nor point; but put a sword into the hand of conscience, and how might this easy assenter to the justice of infinite torments, grow astonished and angry, if you were to tell him that he deserves to suffer but the amputation of a single finger! Or, tell the sinner that he shall suffer for his offences a thousand ages hence, and though it may be true, and will be true, if he goes on offending till that period, yet it will not come home to his heart with half so vivid an impression, or half so effectual a restraint, as to make him foresee the pain, the remorse, and shame, that he will suffer the very next hour. Tell him, in fine, as it is common to do—tell him of retribution in the gross, and however strong the language, he may listen to it with apathy,—he often does so; but if you could show him what sin is doing within him at every moment; how every successive offence lays on another and another shade upon the brightness of the soul; how every transgression, as if it held the very sword of justice, is cutting off, one by one, the fine and invisible fibres that bind the soul to happiness; then, by all the love of happiness, such a man must be interested and concerned for himself. Or, tell the bad man that he must be converted, or he cannot be happy hereafter, and you declare to him an impressive truth; but how much would it add to the impression, if, instead of leaving him to suppose that bare conversion—in the popular sense of that term—that the brief work of an hour would bring him to heaven, you should say to him, "You shall be just as happy hereafter, as you are pure and upright,

and no more; you shall be just as happy as your character prepares you to be, and no more; your moral, like your mental, character, though it may take its date or its impulse from a certain moment, is not formed in a moment; your character, that is to say the habit of your mind, is the result of many thoughts, and feelings, and efforts, and these are bound together by many natural and strong ties; so that it is strictly true, and this is the great law of retribution, that all coming experience is to be affected by every present feeling; that every future moment of being must answer for every present moment; that one moment, sacrificed to sin, or lost to improvement, is for ever sacrificed and lost; that one year's delay, or one hour's wilful delay, to enter the right path is to put you back so far, in the everlasting pursuit of happiness; and that every sin—ay, every sin of a good man, is thus to be answered for, though not according to the full measure of its ill-desert, yet, according to a rule of unbending rectitude and impartiality." This is, undoubtedly, the strict and solemn Law of Retribution: but how much its strictness has really entered—I say not now into our hearts and lives—I will take up that serious question in another season of meditation—but how much the strictness of the principle of retribution has entered into our theories, our creeds,our speculations, is a matter that deserves attention.

It is worthy of remark, indeed, that there is no doctrine which is more universally received, and, at the same time, more universally evaded, than this very doctrine which we are considering. It is universally received, because the very condition of human existence involves it, because it is a matter of experience; every after-period of life being affected, and known to be affected, by the conduct of every earlier period; manhood by youth, and age by manhood; professional success, by the preparation for it; domestic happiness, by conjugal fidelity, and parental care. It is thus seen, that life is a tissue into which the thread of this connexion is everywhere interwoven. It is thus seen, that the law of retribution presses upon every man, whether he thinks of it or not; that it pursues him through all the courses of life, with a step that never falters nor tires, and with an eye that never sleeps nor slumbers. The doctrine of a future retribution has been universally received, too, because it has been felt that in no other way could the impartiality of God's government be vindicated; that if the best and worst men in the world, if the ruthless oppressor and his innocent victim, if the proud and boasting injurer, and the meek and patient sufferer are to go to the same reward, to the same approbation of the good and just God, there is an end of all discrimination, of all moral government, and of all light upon the mysteries of providence. It has been felt, moreover, that character carries with it, and in its most intimate nature, the principles of retribution, and that it must work out weal or woe for its possessor.

But this doctrine, so universally received, has been, I say, as universally evaded. The classic mythologies of paganism did, indeed, teach that there were infernal regions; but few were doomed to them, and for those few, who, failing of the rites of sepulture, or of some other ceremonial qualification, were liable to that doom, an escape was provided, by their wandering on the banks of the Styx awhile, as preparatory to their entering Elysium. So, too, the creed of the Catholics, though it spoke of hell, had also its purgatory to soften the horrors of

retribution. And now there are, as I think, among the body of Protestants, certain speculative, or rather, may I say, mechanical views of the future state, and of the preparation for it, and of the principles of mercy in its allotments, that tend to let down the strictness of that law which for ever binds us to the retributive future.

Is it not a question, let me barely ask in passing, whether this universal evasion does not show that the universal belief has been extravagant; whether men have not believed too much to believe it strictly and specifically to its minutest point? It certainly is a very striking fact, that, while the popular creed teaches that almost the whole living world is going down to everlasting torments, the popular sympathy interposes to save from that doom almost the whole dying world.

But not to dwell on this observation,—I shall proceed now briefly to consider some of those modern views which detract from the strictness of the law of retribution.

I. And the first which I shall notice is the view of the actual scene of retribution, as consisting of two conditions, entirely opposite, and altogether different. Mankind, according to this view, are divided into two distinct classes, the one of which is to enjoy infinite happiness, and the other to suffer infinite misery. It is a far stronger case than would be made by the supposition, that man's varied efforts to gain worldly good were to be rewarded, by assigning to one portion of the race, boundless wealth, and to the other, absolute poverty; for it is infinite happiness on the one hand, and, not the bare destitution of it, but infinite misery on the other.

Let me observe, before I proceed farther to point out what I consider to be the defect which attends this popular view of retribution, that the view itself is not warranted by scripture. The Bible teaches us that virtue will be rewarded, and sin punished; that the good shall receive good, and the evil shall receive evil; and that is all that it teaches us. It unfolds to us this simple, and solemn, and purely spiritual issue, and nothing more.

All else is figurative; and so the most learned interpreters have generally agreed to consider it. It is obvious, that representations of what passes, in the future world, taken from the present world, must be of this character. When heaven is represented as a city, and hell as a deep abyss, and Christ is described as coming to judgment on a throne, with the state and splendour of an oriental monarch, and separating—*in form and visibly* separating the righteous from the wicked, we know, or should know, that these representations are figurative descriptions of a single and simple fact; and this fact is, and this is the whole of the fact that is taught us, that a distinction will be made between good men and bad men; and that they will be rewarded or punished hereafter, according to the character they have formed and sustained here.

It is to be remembered, too, in appealing to the Scriptures, that there are other teachings in them than those which are figurative, and teachings which bind us far more to the letter. It is written, that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap; and that God will render unto every man according to his deeds—*i. e.* according to his character, as by deeds is doubtless meant in this instance.

But now to return to the view already stated: I maintain, that the boundless distinction which it makes in the states of the future life, is not rendering unto men according to their deeds,—that is to say, according to their character,—because of this character there are many diversities, and degrees, and shades. Men differ in virtue precisely as they differ in intelligence; by just as many and imperceptible degrees. As many as are the diversities of moral education in the world, as numerous as are the shades of circumstance in life, as various as are the degrees of moral capacity and effort in various minds, so must the results differ. If character were formed by machinery, there might be but two samples: but if it is formed by voluntary agency, the results must be as diversified and complicated as the operations of that agency. And the fact, which every man's observations must show him, undoubtedly is, that virtue in men differs just as intelligence does; differs, I repeat, by just as many and imperceptible degrees. But now suppose that men were to be rewarded for their intelligence hereafter. Would all the immense variety of cases be met by two totally different and opposite allotments? Take the scale of character, and mark on it all the degrees of difference, and all the divisions of a degree. Now, what point on the scale will you select, at which to make the infinite difference of allotments? Select it where you will, and there will be the thousandth part of a degree above rewarded with perfect happiness, and a thousandth part of a degree below doomed to perfect misery. Would this be right, with regard to the intelligence or virtue of men?

We are misled on this subject by that loose and inaccurate division of mankind, which is common, into the two classes of saints and sinners. We might as well say, that all men are either strong or weak, wise or foolish, intellectual or sensual. So they are, in a general sense; but not in a sense that excludes all discrimination. And the language of the Bible, when it speaks of the good and bad, of the righteous and wicked, is to be understood with the same reasonable discrimination, with the same reasonable qualification of its meaning, as when it speaks of the rich and poor. The truth is—the matter of fact is—that, from the highest point of virtue to the lowest point of wickedness, there are, I repeat, innumerable steps, and men are standing upon all these steps; they are actually found in all these gradations of character. Now, to render to such beings according to their character, is not to appoint to them two totally distinct and opposite allotments, but just as many allotments as there are shades of moral difference between them.

But does not the Bible speak of two distinct classes of men as amenable to the judgment, and of but two; and does it not say of the one class, "these shall go away into everlasting fire," and of the other, "but the righteous into life eternal"? Certainly it does. And so do we constantly say that the good shall be happy, and the bad shall be miserable, in the coming world. But do we, or does the Bible, intend to speak without any discrimination? Especially, can the omniscient scrutiny, and the unerring rule, be supposed to overlook any, even the slightest differences, and the most delicate shades of character? On the contrary, we are told that "one star differeth from another in glory:" and we are told that there is a "lowest hell:" and we are led to admit that, in the allotments of retributive justice, the best among bad men,

and the worst among good men, may come as near to each other in condition as they come in character.

I am not saying, let it be observed, that the difference even in this case is unimportant; still less that it is so in general. Nay, and the difference between the states of the very good man and of the very bad man may indeed be as great as any theory supposes; it may be much greater, in fact, than any man's imagination conceives; but this is not the only difference that is to be brought into the final account; for there are many intermediate ranks between the best and the worst. I say, that the difference of allotment may—nay, and that it must be great. The truly good man, the devoted Christian, shall, doubtless, experience a happiness beyond his utmost expectation: the bad man, the self-indulgent, the self-ruined man, will, doubtless, find his doom severer than he had looked for. I say not what it may be. But this, at least, we may be sure of, that the consequences both of good and bad conduct will be more serious, will strike deeper, than we are likely, amidst the gross and dim perceptions of sense, to comprehend.

But this is not the point which I am at present arguing. It is not the extent of the consequences; but it is the strict and discriminating impartiality which shall measure out those affecting results; it is the strict law by which every man shall reap the fruits of that which he sows. And I say that the artificial, imaginative, and, as I think, unauthorized ideas which prevail with regard to a future life, let down the strictness of the law.

Let me now illustrate this by a single supposition. Suppose that you were to live in this world one thousand or ten thousand years; and suppose, too, that you felt that every present moment was a probation for every future moment; and that, in order to be happy, you must be pure; that every fault, every wrong habit of life or feeling, would tend and would continue, to make you unhappy, till it was faithfully and effectually corrected; and corrected by yourself—not by the hand of death—not by the exchange of worlds. Suppose yourself to entertain the conviction, that, if you plunged into self-indulgence and sin, diseases, and distempers, and woes, would accumulate upon you, with no friendly interposition or rescue, no all-healing nostrum, no medicine of sovereign and miraculous efficacy to save—that diseases, I say, and distempers, and woes, would accumulate upon you, in dark and darkening forms, for a thousand years. Suppose that every evil passion, anger, or avarice, or envy, or selfishness in any of its forms, would—unless resisted and overcome,—would make you more and more miserable for a thousand years. I say, that such a prospect, limited as it is in comparison, would be more impressive and salutary, a more powerful restraint upon sin, a more powerful stimulus to improvement, than the prospect, as it is usually contemplated, of the retributions of eternity! Are we then, making all that we ought to make of the prospect of an eternal retribution? God's justice will be as strict there as it is here. And although bodily diseases may not accumulate upon us there, yet the diseases of the soul, if we take not heed to them, will accumulate upon us; and he who has only one degree of purity, and ten degrees of sin in him, must not lay that flattering unction to his soul, that death will "wash out the long arrears of guilt." I know that this is a doc-

trine of unbending strictness—a doctrine, I had almost said, insufferably strict: but I believe that it is altogether true.

"But," some one may say, "if I am converted—if I have repented of my sins, and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ—then I have the assurance, through God's mercy, of pardon and heaven."

This statement embraces the other doctrinal evasion of the law of retribution which I proposed to consider. And I must venture to express the apprehension, that, by those who answer thus to the strict and unaccommodating demand of inwrought purity, neither conversion, nor repentance, nor the mercy of God, are understood as they ought to be.

A man says, "I am not to be judged by the law, but by the gospel." But when he says that, let me tell him, he should take care to know what he says, and whereof he affirms. The difference between the law and the gospel, I believe, is much misapprehended in this respect. The gospel is not a more easy, not a more lax rule to walk by, but only a more encouraging rule. The law demands rectitude, and declares that the sinner deserves the miseries of a future life; and there it stops, and of course, it leaves the offender in despair. The gospel comes in—and it did come in, with its teaching and prophetic sacrifices, even amidst the thunders of Sinai—saying, If thou wilt repent and believe, if thou wilt embrace the faith and spirit of the all-humbling and the all-redeeming religion—the way to happiness is still open. But does the gospel do any more than open the way? Does it make the way more easy, more indulgent, less self-denying? Does it say, you need not be as good as the law requires, and yet you shall be none the less happy for all that? Does it say, you need not do as well, and yet it shall be just as well with you? "Is Christ the minister of sin? God forbid!" Nay, be it remembered, that the solemn declaration upon which we are this day meditating—whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap—is recorded, not in the law, but in the gospel!

"But if I repent," it may be said, "am I not forgiven entirely?" If you repent entirely, you are forgiven entirely; and not otherwise. What is repentance? It is a change of mind. That, as every scholar knows, is the precise meaning of the original word in the Scriptures which is translated repentance. It is a change of mind. If, then, your repentance, your change of mind is entire, your forgiveness, your happiness is complete; but on no other principle, and in no other proportion. Sorrow is only one of the indications of this repentance or change of heart; though it has unfortunately usurped, in common use, the whole meaning of the word. Sorrow is not the only indication of repentance, for joy as truly springs from it. It is not, therefore, the bare fact that you are sorry, however sincerely and disinterestedly sorry, for your offences, that will deliver you from all the suffering which your sins and sinful habits must occasion. You may be sorry, for instance, and truly sorry, for your anger; yet if the passion breaks out again, it must again give you pain; and it must for ever give you pain while it lives. You may grieve for your vices. Does that grief instantly stop the course of penalty? Will it instantly repair a shattered constitution? You may regret, in declining life, a state of mind produced by too much devotion to worldly gain—the want of intellectual and moral resources and habits. Will the dearth and the desolation depart

from your mind when that regret enters it? Will even the tears of repentance immediately cause freshness and verdure to spring up in your path?

"But," it may be said, once more, "does not all depend on our being converted, or being born again? And is not conversion, is not the new birth, the event of a moment?"

I answer, with all the certainty of conviction that I am capable of—No; it is not the event of a moment. That conversion which fits a soul for heaven is not the event of a moment. And, my brethren, I would not answer thus in a case where there is controversy, if I did not think it a matter of the most serious importance. Can anything be more fatal—can any one of all loose doctrines be more loose—than to tell an offender, who is going to the worst excesses in sin, that he may escape all the evil results—all the results of fifty, sixty, seventy years of self-indulgence—by one instant's experience? Can any one of us believe—dare we believe—that one moment's virtue can prepare us for the happiness of eternity? Can we believe this, especially when we are, on every page of the Bible, commanded to watch, and pray, and strive, and labour, and by patient continuance in well-doing, to seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; and this, as the express condition of obtaining eternal life or happiness?

No, Christians! subjects of the Christian law! no conversion, no repentance, no mercy of heaven, will save you from the final operation of that sentence, or should save you from its warning now—"Be not deceived"—as if there was special danger of being deceived here—"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh, shall of his flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

It is a high and strict—I had almost said a terrible—discrimination. Yet let us bring it home to our hearts, although it be as a sword to cut off some cherished sin. Oh! this miserable and slavish folly of inquiring whether we have piety and virtue enough to save us! Do men ever talk thus about the acquisition of riches or honours? Do they act as if all their solicitude was to ascertain and to stop at the point that would just save them from want, or secure them from disgrace?—"Enough virtue to save you," do you say? The very question shows that you have not enough. It shows that your views of salvation are yet technical and narrow, if not selfish. It shows that all your thoughts of retribution yet turn to solicitude and apprehension.

The law of retribution is the law of God's goodness. It addresses not only the fear of sin, but the love of improvement. Its grand requisition is that of progress. It urges us at every step to press forward. And however many steps we may have taken, it urges us still to take another and another, by the same pressing reason with which it urged us to take the first step.

Yes, by the same pressing reason, let him who thinks himself a good man, who thinks that he is converted, and is on the right side, and in the safe state, and in the way to heaven, and who, nevertheless, from this false reasoning and this presumptuous security, indulges in little sins—irritability, covetousness, or worldly pride—let him know that his doom shall be hereafter, and is now, *a kind of hell*, compared with the

blessedness in store for loftier virtue and holier piety; and let him know, too, that, compared with that loftier standard, he has almost as much reason to tremble for himself as the poor sinner he looks down upon; for if woes are denounced against the impenitent sinner, so are woes denounced, in terms scarcely less awful, against the secure, lukewarm, negligent Christian. God is no respecter of persons, nor of professions. It is written that "he will render to *every* man according to his deeds;" it is written, too, that "*whatsoever* a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

I repeat that language of fearful discrimination, "*whatsoever* a man *soweth, that* — not something else — *that* shall he also *reap*." That which you *are doing*—be it good or evil, be it grave or gay—that which you are doing to-day and to-morrow—each thought, each feeling, each action, each event—every passing hour, every breathing moment, is contributing to form the character by which you are to be judged. Every particle of influence that goes to form that aggregate, your character, shall, in that future scrutiny, be sifted out from the mass, and shall fall, particle by particle, with ages perhaps intervening—shall fall, a distinct contribution to the sum of your joys or your woes. Thus every idle word, every idle hour, shall give answer in the judgment. Think not against the closeness and severity of this inquisition, to put up any barrier of theological speculation. Conversion, repentance, pardon, mean they what they will, mean nothing that will save you from reaping, down to the very root and ground of good or evil, that which you have sowed. Think not to wrap that future world in any blackness of darkness, nor any folding flame, as if for the imagination to be alarmed were all you had to feel or fear. Clearly, distinctly, shall the voice of accusation fall upon the guilty ear; as when upon earth, the man of crime comes reluctantly forth from his hiding-place, and stands at the bar of his country's justice, and the voices of his associates say, "thou didst it?" If there be any unchangeable, any adamantine fate in the universe, this is that fate—that the future shall for ever bring forth the fruits of the past.

Take care, then, what thou sowest, as if thou wert taking care for eternity. That sowing of which the Scripture speaketh, what is it? Yesterday, perhaps, some evil temptation came upon you—the opportunity of unrighteous gain or of unhallowed indulgence, came either in the sphere of business or of pleasure, of society or of solitude. If you yielded to it, then and there did you plant a seed of bitterness and sorrow. To-morrow, it may be, will threaten discovery; and agitated, alarmed, you will cover the sin, and bury it deeper, in falsehood and hypocrisy. In the hiding bosom, in the fruitful soil of kindred vices, that sin dies not, but thrives and grows; and other and still other germs of evil gather around the accursed root, till, from that single seed of corruption, there springs up in the soul all that is horrible in habitual lying, knavery, or vice. Long before such a life comes to its close, its poor victim may have advanced within the very precincts of hell. Yes, the hell of debt, of disease, of ignominy, or of remorse, may gather its shadows around the steps of the transgressor even on earth; and yet these—if Holy Scripture be unerring, and sure experience be prophetic—these are but the beginnings of sorrows. The evil deed may be done, alas! in a moment—in one fatal moment; but conscience

never dies; memory never sleeps; guilt never can become innocence; and remorse can never, never whisper peace. Pardon may come from heaven, but self-forgiveness may never come.

Beware, then, thou who art tempted to evil—and every being before me is tempted to evil—beware what thou layest up for the future; beware what thou layest up in the archives of eternity. Thou who wouldst wrong thy neighbour, beware! lest the thought of that injured man, wounded and suffering from thine injury, be a pang which a thousand years may not deprive of its bitterness. Thou who wouldst break into the house of innocence, and rifle it of its treasure, beware! lest, when a thousand ages have rolled their billows over thee, the moan of its distress may not have died away from thine ear. Thou who wouldst build the desolate throne of ambition in thy heart, beware what thou art doing with all thy devices, and circumventings, and selfish schemings! lest desolation and loneliness be on thy path as it stretches into the long futurity. Thou, in fine, who art living a negligent and irreligious life, beware! beware how thou livest; for bound up with that life is the immutable principle of an endless retribution—bound up with that life are elements of God's creating, which shall never spend their force,—which shall be unfolding and unfolding with the ages of eternity. Beware! I say once more, and be not deceived. *Be not deceived;* God is not mocked; God, who has formed thy nature thus to answer to the future, is not mocked; his law can never be abrogated; his justice can never be eluded: beware then—be forewarned; since, for ever and for ever will it be true, that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap!

THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION.

GALATIANS vi. 7: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

THE views which are usually presented of a future retribution are characterized, as I have observed in my last discourse, rather by strength than by strictness of representation. The great evil attending the common statements of this doctrine, I shall now venture to say, is not that they are too alarming. Men are not enough alarmed at the dangers of a sinful course. No men are; no men, though they sit under the most terrifying dispensation of preaching that ever was devised. But the evil is, that alarm is addressed too much to the imagination, and too little to the reason and conscience. Neither Whitfield, nor Baxter, nor Edwards,—though the horror produced by his celebrated sermon "on the justice of God in the damnation of sinners" is a matter of tradition in New England to this very day—yet no one of them ever preached too much terror, though they may have preached it too exclusively; but the evil was, that they preached terror, I repeat, too much to the imagination, and too little to the reason and conscience. Of mere fright there may be too much; but of real rational fear there never *can* be too much. Sin, vice, a corrupt mind, a guilty life, and the woes naturally flowing from these, never can be too much dreaded. It is one thing for the preacher to deal in mathematical calculations of infinite suffering; to dwell upon the eternity of hell's torments; to speak of literal fires and of burning in them for ever; and with these representations, it is easy to scare the imagination, to awaken horror, and a horror so great, as to be at war with the clear, calm, and faithful discriminations of conscience. With such means it is easy to produce a great excitement in the mind. But he who should, or who *could*, unveil the realities of a strict and spiritual retribution; show what every sinner loses; show what every sinner must suffer, in and through the very character he forms; show, too, how bitterly every good man must sorrow for every sin, here or hereafter; show, in fine, what sin is, and for ever must be, to an immortal nature, would make an impression more deep, and sober, and effectual.

It is not my purpose at present to attempt any detail of this nature, though I shall be governed by the observations I have made in the views which I *am* to present, and for which I venture to ask a rational, and calm, and most serious consideration.

The future is to answer for the present. This is the great law of retribution. And so obviously necessary and just is it; so evidently does our character create our welfare or woe: so certainly must it give us pain or pleasure, as long as it goes with us, whether in this world or another world, that it seems less requisite to support the doctrine by argument, than to save it from evasions.

There are such evasions. No theology has yet come up to the strictness of this law. It is still more true that no practice has yet come up to it. There are theoretical evasions,—and I think they are to be found in the views which are often presented of conversion, and repentance, and of God's mercy, and the actual scenes of retribution; but there is one practical evasion, one into which the whole world has fallen, and so dangerous, so momentous in its danger, that it may well deserve, for one season of meditation, I believe, to engross our entire and undivided attention.

This grand evasion, this great and fatal mistake, may be stated in general terms to be, *the substitution of something as a preparation for future happiness, in place of devoting the whole life to it,* or to a course which is fitted to procure it. This evasion takes the particular form, perhaps, of an expectation, that some sudden and extraordinary experience may, at a future time, accomplish what is necessary to prepare the mind for happiness and heaven; or that certain circumstances, such as sickness and affliction, may, at some subsequent period of life, force the growth of that which is not cultivated now, and may thus remedy the fearful and fatal neglect; or it is an expectation—and this is the most prevalent form of the error—that old age or death, when it comes, will have power to penetrate the heart with emotion, and subdue it to repentance, and prepare it for heaven. The subject—yet, it must be feared to be the victim—of this stupendous error is convinced that in order to be happy eventually, he must become pure; —there is no principle of indulgence, there is no gospel of mercy, that can absolve him from that necessity—he must become pure; he must be pious; his nature must be exalted and refined. It is his nature, his mind that is to be happy, and he is convinced by experience that his mind must be cultivated, purified, prepared for that end. But he is not doing this work to-day, nor does he expect to do it to-morrow; he is not doing it this month, nor does he expect to do it next month; he is not doing it this year, nor does he, in particular, expect to do it next year; and thus, month after month, and year after year, are passing, and one season of life after another is stealing away; and the only hope is, that in some tremendous exigency, or by some violent paroxysm, when fear, and remorse, and disease, and death, are darkly struggling together, *that* may be done for which the whole previous course of life has not been found sufficient.

But is it true—for I am willing to pause at this point, and deliberately to consider the question—is it true, can it be true, some one may ask, that a mistake so gross, so irrational, so at war with all that we know about character, about its formation, and its necessary results; can it be true, that such a mistake about the whole vast concern of our happiness is actually made by any of us? Can it be, you will say, that men with reason, and experience, and Scripture, to guide them; can it be, that men in their senses, are substituting in place of that deliberate formation of their character for happiness, for which life is given, some brief preparation for it at a future period, and especially at the last period of their lives?

I am persuaded that it is true, my brethren, however strange; and these are the considerations that convince me of it.

In the first place, there are multitudes around us that hope and

expect to be happy hereafter, who are conscious that they are not preparing for it; who acknowledge at every successive stage of life, that if they were instantly to die, without any further opportunity to prepare for it, there would be little or no hope for them; who feel that if the very character, which they are now every day forming, were to go to the judgment, their case would be desperate; who hope, therefore, most evidently, not to be judged by the prevailing tenor of their lives, but secretly expect to do something at last to retrieve the errors, the follies, and sins, which they are now daily committing.

Again, although it is a common impression that but *few* LIVE in a habitual preparation for heaven, the impression is almost *as* common, that but few actually *die* unprepared. Of almost every individual who leaves the world something is told which encourages the hopes of survivors concerning him. I stand before you, my brethren, as a Christian minister, and I solemnly declare, that familiar as I have been with that sad and mournful scene, the death of the wicked, it has almost invariably left this strange and delusive hope behind it. Indeed, the extreme solicitude with which every symptom of preparation is marked in these circumstances, the trembling anxiety with which every word and look is caught, but too plainly indicate the same impression. What the amount of this proof is we will presently consider. It is sufficient at this point of the inquiry to state, that it is collected and arranged as carefully, and offered as confidently, as if it were material; that it encourages those who repeat and those who hear it; that the instance of death is very rare in which surviving friends do not tell you that they trust and believe that all is well. Even when a man has led an eminently pious life, many are apt to feel as if the proof of his piety was not consummated, unless he had died a happy and triumphant death: as though it were to be expected—it may happen so, indeed, and we have great cause to thank God when it does—but as though it were to be expected and looked for as a matter of course, that in feebleness, and distress of body and mind, and the sinking of all the faculties, the mind should exhibit its utmost energy—as if, amidst the cold damps of death, the expiring flame of sensibility should rise the highest. It is to be feared that good men, and with the best intentions, no doubt, have yet given great distress to many faithful Christians, and done great injury to others, by countenancing this unreasonable notion. The great question is, not how a good man dies, but how he has *lived*.

The third and final reason, which convinces me of the prevalence of this mistake which I am considering is, the almost universal dread of sudden death. It is not to be denied, indeed, that a change so great as that of death, and so mysterious, too, is in itself, and naturally, fitted to awaken a feeling of apprehension. But I maintain, that the principal reason for this apprehension is the fear of consequences, "the dread of something *after* death;" and that there is a vague hope in almost every mind that some preparation could be made at the last, if only a little time were granted for it. And indeed, if we all entertained a settled conviction that we are to reap as we have sowed; that we are to be miserable or happy in the other world, according to the character we have formed in this; that we are to be judged by the life we live, and not by the death we die; what would it import to us whether we fell suddenly in the paths of life, or slowly declined from them?—whe-

ther we sunk at once beneath the stroke of an apoplexy, or more slowly under the attack of a consumption? Something it would import to us, no doubt, as friends, for we should wish to give our dying counsels; but, as expectants of retribution, what could the time of a week or a month's last sickness avail us? I will answer; and I say, as much—by the most favourable supposition—as much as such a space of time in any part of life could avail us, and no more.

Such then, and so fearful, and proved to be so fearful by the plainest indications, is the moral state of multitudes. Life is given them for the cultivation of a sacred virtue, of a lofty piety, of pure and godlike affections, as the only way to future improvement and happiness. They are not devoting life to this end; they know they are not; they confess they are not; and their hope is—yes, the hope on which they rest their whole being is, that by some hasty effort, or paroxysm of emotion, in the feeble and helpless time of sickness, or in the dark day of death, they shall be able to redeem the lost hope of a negligent life. If only a week or a month of health were offered them to prepare; if that specific time, a week, or a month, were taken out from the midst of life, and they were solemnly told that this would be all the time they would have to prepare for eternity, they would be in despair; and yet they hope to do this in a month or a week of pain, and languishment, and distracting agitation. It is as if the husbandman should sport away the summer season, and then should think to retrieve his error by planting his fields in the autumn. It is as if the student should trifle away the season appointed for his education, and then, when the time came for entering upon his profession, should think to make up for his deficiencies by a few weeks of violent, hurried, and irregular application. It shows, alas! that the world, with all its boasts of an enlightened age, has not yet escaped the folly of those days of superstition, when the eucharist was administered to dying persons, and was forcibly administered, if the patient had no longer sense to receive it; or when men deferred their baptism till death; as if the future state were to depend on these last ceremonies. And as well depend on ceremonies—and more consistently could we do so—as depend on any momentary preparation for happiness: as well build a church or a monastery to atone for our sins, as to build that fabric of error in our imagination.

It is not for us, I know, to limit the Almighty! It is not for us to say that he cannot change the soul in the last moments of its stay on earth. But this we may fearlessly say, that he does it, if at all, by a miraculous agency, of whose working we can have no conception, and of whose results, by the very supposition, we can have no knowledge.

I desire, my brethren, to state this point with all sufficient caution. I not only do not deny that God has power to convert the soul in the last moments of life, but I do not absolutely deny that there may be some such instances in the passing away of every generation. I do not know, and none of us can know, whether such miracles are performed or not. It is commonly thought that the case recorded in Luke's gospel, of the thief on the cross, is an instance of this nature. But I do not think it can be pronounced to be such. We know not how much time he may have had to repent and form a new character. He says, "we indeed suffer justly;" but the act for which he suffered, may have been

a single act, in which he had fallen from a generally good life. But admit that such interpositions do take place: is it safe to rely upon them? We do not know that they do. We do not know that, in the passing away of all the generations of mankind, there has been one such instance. Is it safe to rely, in so tremendous a case, upon what we do not know, and upon what, after all, may never be? My object is to show that it is not safe; and for this purpose, I shall reason upon the general principle. The general principle is, that the future must answer for the present; the future of this life, for the present of this life; the next month for this month; the next year for this year; and in the same way, the next life for this life. I say, then, that the expectation of any hasty retrieving of a bad month, of a bad year, of a bad life, is irrational and unwarrantable, and ought to be considered as desperate.

I. And for the purpose of showing this, I observe, in the first place, that the expectation of preparing for futurity hastily, or by any other means than the voluntary and deliberate formation of right and virtuous habits in the mind; or that the expectation of preparing for death, when it comes, is opposed to the professed import of that sacred volume, which gives law alike to our hopes and our fears.

It is opposed to the obvious, and the professed, and the leading character of the Bible. What is that character? What is the Bible? It is a revelation of laws, motives, directions, and excitements, to religious virtue. But all of these are useless, if this character is to be formed by a miraculous energy, at a perilous conjuncture, or in a last moment. Motives must be contemplated, directions must be understood, excitements must be felt, to be effectual; and all this must be done deliberately, must be many times repeated, must be combined with diligence, and patience, and faith, and must be slowly, as everything is, slowly wrought into the character, in order to be effectual.

But it may be said, "If the rule is so strict, where is the *mercy* of the gospel?" I answer, that its very mercy is engaged to make us pure; that its mercy would be no mercy if it did not do this; and that, of becoming pure and good, there is but one way, and that is the way of voluntary effort—an effort to be assisted by divine grace, indeed, but none the less, on that account, an effort, and an endeavour, a watching, and a striving, a conflict, and a victory. I answer again, that the mercy of the gospel is a moral and rational, a high and glorious principle. It is not a principle of laxity in morals. It is not a principle of indulgence to the heart. It is a moral principle, and not a wonder-working machinery, by which a man is to be lifted up and borne away from guilt to purity, from earth to heaven, he knows not how. It offers to fabricate no wings for the immortal flight. It is a rational principle, and is not based upon the subversion of all the laws of experience and wisdom. The gospel opens the *way* to heaven—opens the way to poor, sinful, ill-deserving creatures. Is not that mercy enough? Shall the guilty and lost spurn that, and demand more? It opens the way, I repeat; but then it lays its instructions, commands, and warnings thickly upon that way. With unnumbered directions to faith, and patience, and prayer, and toil, and self-denial, it marks out every step of that way. It tells us, again and again, that such is its way of salvation, and no other. In other words, it offers us happiness, and pre-

scribes the terms. And those terms, if they were of a meaner character, if they were low and lax, would degrade even our nature, and we could not respect them. It would, in fact, be no mercy to natures like ours to treat them in any other way.

In speaking of the scriptural representations on this subject, the parable of "the labourers in the vineyard" may probably occur to you, in which he who came at the eleventh hour received as much as he who had borne the heat and burden of the day. I suppose the parable has no relation whatever to this subject. It cannot intend to teach that he who is a Christian during his whole life is no more an object of the divine approbation, and is to be no more happy, than he who is so for a very small part of it. It evidently refers to the introduction of the Christian dispensation; it relates to the Jews and Gentiles as nations; meaning that the Gentiles, who came later into covenant with God, would be as favourably received as the Jews.

To interpret this parable as encouraging men to put off their preparation for futurity till death, if there were no other objection, would contradict, I repeat, all the scriptural information we have on this subject. This would appear, if you should carry to the oracles of divine truth any question whatever about piety, or virtue, or the qualification for heaven. What is piety itself? A momentary exercise or a habit? Something thrown into the heart in a mass, or a state of the heart itself, formed by long effort and care? Does the great qualification for heaven consist in one, two, or ten good exercises, or in a good character? And to what is that judgment to relate which will decide our future condition? "Who will render," says the sacred record, "to every man according to his deeds!"

Open that most solemn and formal account of the judgment contained in the 25th chapter of Matthew; and what is the great test? I still answer, deeds; deeds of piety and charity, the conduct, the character, the permanent affections of each individual. But still further to decide the question, if it can be necessary, let it be asked, what is that heaven of which we hear and say so much? What is heaven? Are we still like children fancying that heaven is a beautiful city, into which one needs only the powers of locomotion to enter? Do we not know that heaven is in the mind, in the greatness, and purity, and elevation of our immortal nature? If piety and virtue, then, are a habit and state of mind expressed and acted out in a life that is holy; if the judgment has relation to this alone; if heaven consist in this; what hope can there be in a brief and slight preparation?

II. No, my friends, the terms on which we receive happiness—and I now appeal to reason in the second place—the terms on which we receive true, moral, satisfying happiness, cannot be easy. They are not; experience shows that they are not; life shows that they are not; and eternity will but develop the same strict law; for it is a part of our nature,—it is a part of the nature and reason of things. The senses may yield us such pleasure as they can yield, without effort; taste may delight us, and imagination may minister to us, in careless reverie; but conscience does not offer to us its happiness on such terms. I know not what may be the law for other beings in some other sphere; but I know that no truly, morally happy being was ever made here, but through much effort, long culture, frequent self-denial, and abiding

faith, patience, and prayer. To be truly happy, what is so difficult? What is so rare? And is heaven, think you—the blessed consummation of all that man can ask,—to be obtained at less expense than it will cost to gain one pure, calm day upon earth? For even this comparatively trifling boon, one blessed day, one day of religious joy, one day of joy in meditation and prayer, one day of happiness that is spiritual, and not physical nor circumstantial—even this comparatively slight boon, I say, cannot be gained without long preparation of mind, and heart, and habit. There are multitudes around us, and of us, to whom, at this moment, one such day's happiness is a thing just as impossible as it would be in that day to make a world! And shall they think to escape this very law of happiness under which they are actually living, and to fly away to heaven on the wings of imagination?—to pass at once from unfaithfulness to reward, from apathy to ecstasy, from the neglect and dislike of prayer to the blessed communion of heavenly worship, from this hour of being, absorbed in sense and the world, to an eternity of spiritual glory and triumph? No; be assured that facts are here, as they are everywhere, worth more than fancies—be they those of dreaming visionaries, or ingenious theologians: if you are not now happy in penitence, and humility, and prayer, and the love of God, you are not in fact prepared to be happy in them hereafter. No; between the actual state of mind prevailing in many, and the bliss of heaven, "there is a great gulf fixed"—over which no wing of mortal nor angel was ever spread. No; the law of essential, enduring, triumphant happiness is labour and long preparation for it; and it is a law which will never, never—never be annulled!

There is a law, too, concerning habits. It is implied in the following language:—"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may those who are accustomed to do evil, learn to do well!" Habit is no slight bond. Slightly at first, and gently afterwards, may it have drawn its silken cords around us; but not so are its bonds to be cast from us; nor can they, like a green withe, be broken by one gigantic effort. No; the bonds of habit are chains and fetters that must be worn off. Through the long process of slow and imperceptible degrees, they must be severed with weariness, and galling, and bitter anguish.

"Can it be supposed," says an eloquent writer and preacher, "that where the vigour of life has been spent in the establishment of vicious propensities; where all the vivacity of youth, and all the soberness of manhood, and all the wisdom of old age, have been given to the service of sin; where vice has been growing with the growth, and strengthening with the strength; where it has spread out with the limbs of the stripling, and become rigid with the fibres of the aged—can it, I say, be supposed that the labours of such a life are to be overthrown by one last exertion of the mind, impaired with disease; by the convulsive exercise of an affrighted spirit; and by the inarticulate and feeble sounds of an expiring breath?"

Besides, the rule is as equitable as, in the divine ordination of things, it is necessary. The judgment which ordains that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap, is a righteous judgment. It is easy, no doubt, to regret a bad life when it is just over. When death comes, and the man must leave his sinful indulgences and pleasures; or when

he has no longer any capacity for enjoying them; when sickness has enfeebled the appetites, or age has chilled the passions, then, indeed, is it but a slight sacrifice, and a yet poorer merit in him to feel regret. But regret, let it be considered, is not repentance! And while the former may be easy and almost involuntary, the other—the repentance—may be as hard as the adverse tendencies of a whole life can make it. Yes, the hardest of all things, then, will be to repent. Yes, I repeat, that which is relied upon to save a man, after the best part of life has been lost, has become, by the very habits of that life, almost a moral impossibility.

And the regret, the selfish regret—can it be accepted? I ask not if it can be accepted by our Maker; I doubt not his infinite mercy; but can it be accepted by our own nature? Can our nature be purified by it? Can the tears of that dark hour of selfish sorrow, or the awful insensibility which no tear comes to relieve—can either of them purge away from the bosom the stains of a life of sin? Let us never make the fearful experiment! Let us not go down to the last tremendous scene of life, there, amidst pain and distraction, with the work of life to do! Let us not have to acquire peace from very terror, and hope from very despair; let us not thus trust ourselves to a judgment "that will render unto us according to our deeds; that will render—mark the explanation—to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, eternal life; but tribulation and anguish to every soul that doeth evil."

III. From these views of our subject drawn from Scripture and reason, let me, in the third and last place, refer to a no less decisive consideration which is independent of them; a consideration fully borne out by melancholy facts. It is this; that every man will die very much as he lives: I mean, that in his character, his habits of feeling, he will. There is not this wide difference between the living world and the dying world which is generally supposed. Character, as I have contended, and as we all see, indeed, is not formed in a moment; it cannot, upon any known law or principle—it cannot, but in contradiction to every known law and principle, be changed in a moment. Christianity has introduced no law in subversion of the great laws of experience, and rational motive, and moral action, or of its own established principles. Its doctrine of conversion is only misunderstood when it is supposed to provide a briefer and easier way of preparation for heaven, than watching and striving, and persevering in virtue, and patient continuance in well-doing. I say, therefore, and repeat the certain and solemn truth, that every man will die the same—essentially the same—that he has lived.

For the correctness of this conclusion, I have soon to refer to a single, and as it seems to me, momentous fact. But in the meantime, let me remark that there is one question here which I view with a kind of apprehension I scarcely know how to express; with almost a dread, for once, to ask what the simple truth is. My brethren, we are sometimes called upon to pray for a change of heart, in the sinful and negligent man, as he is drawing nigh, in horror and agony, his last hour! It is an awful situation even to him who only ministers at that dying bed. What shall he *do*—what *can* be done—I have asked myself. Shall I discourage prayer, even in the uttermost extremity? Can I, when I

hear from those lips that are soon to be sealed in death the pathetic entreaty, "Oh, pray!" can I refuse to pray? I do not; I cannot. Prayer is our duty; events are with God. But I must say, I will say —I will tell the negligent man beforehand, what I fear. I fear, I do fear, that such praying is nothing better than the supplication of our terror and despair! I fear that it is altogether an irrational and unauthorized praying! I fear that it is like praying that guilt, and even a whole life of it, may feel no enduring remorse, that sin may not be followed by sorrow, that vice may leap at once to the rewards of virtue, that the sword which a man has plunged into his bosom may not wound him, or that the envenomed draught he has taken may not poison! I fear that it is as if we should take our station on the banks of the mighty river that is pouring its accumulated waters into the ocean, and pray that they may turn back to their fountain-head; or as if we should gaze upon the descending sun in heaven, and pray that he may stand still in his course! I tremble with a strange misgiving, as if it were a praying not to God, but against God!

For, what *is* this prayer? It cannot harm us to make the inquiry now, before that crisis comes. What *is* this prayer? It *is* a prayer that the flow of moral habits may turn back to its source; that the great course of moral causes and effects may all be stopped; that the great laws of the moral universe may all be suspended. It *is* praying against many a solemn declaration of holy writ. And will it—I ask—will the prayer be heard? Again I tremble at that question; again my misgivings come over me; I ask, but I know not what to answer. I know, in fact—I may conjecture and hope—but I *know* of no answer to that awful question, unless it be in this more awful language:—"Be not deceived"—it sounds like a warning in mine ear—"be not deceived; God is not mocked:"—man's indulgence may flatter him; plausible systems of his own devising may encourage him to venture his soul upon an easier way of salvation: and weaker bands than those of almighty justice might have been escaped, but—"God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth"—not what he wishes when the seeds of sin are implanted, and have sprung up, have grown to maturity—I cannot read it so—but "whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap."

Tell me not the oft-repeated tale of a death-bed repentance. I turn to it an incredulous ear. What does it amount to, even when it comes with the kindest testimony of partial affection? Alas! it is doubtful, even in its utmost latitude, and in the moment when it claims our utmost sympathy. For what is it? It is, that the subject of this charitable judgment was willing to die, when to die was inevitable; that he sought for pardon, when he felt that he must be pardoned or perish in his sins; that he prayed, but it was when *Atheists* have prayer; that he hoped, ah! he hoped when it had become too terrible to despair!

And now what is the result? What is it that the issue of all this fearful, I cannot call it flattering, experience tells us? What is the fact on which this solemn conclusion, concerning the inefficacy of a death-bed repentance, rests? In many cases, it is revealed only in another world, and is beyond our scrutiny. But when it is known, I beg it may be solemnly considered what it is, and what is its bearing on the hopes of a death-bed repentance. The result is—and I speak, let it be repeated, of a fact—the result is almost without exception, in cases

where the subject of such experience recovers, that he returns to his old habits of living, without any, or any but a very slight and temporary change. In many such instances, where the experience has been very bright and convincing, the individual retains no recollection of anything he said, or was supposed to have felt. It was all a delirium. The moral state, as well as the mental state, was a delirium. And there is too much reason to fear that all such experience is a moral delirium, at best.—I would not willingly disturb, for one moment, the peace of a fond and anxious friendship. I will not speak of the state of those who are dead, but I must speak of the dangers of those who are living. And surely, if there are any, this side of the retributions of eternity, who could most fearfully warn you not to postpone religion to a dying hour, it would be those who have hung with anxious watchings around the last hours of the disobedient and irreligious, and have trembled, and prayed, and wept for their welfare!

My friends, I have only time to present to you and to myself one practical question; *are we habitually ready to die?* The question, my brethren, is not whether we expect to be ready at some future time. It is not whether we mean to be ready. It is not whether we are making the most solemn promises to ourselves that we will, sometime, set about the preparation for that great hour. But the question is, are we ready for it now? Are we habitually ready? Are we convinced that we are to be judged, not by some imaginary life which we intend, and intend, and for ever intend to lead, and which we never do lead, because we are always intending it—are we convinced, I say, that we are to be judged, not by that imaginary life which we are for ever intending to lead, but by the life which we are now actually living? Have we given up the folly of expecting to do anything in future which we will not do now; of expecting to do that in sickness which we cannot do in health; of expecting to do that in death which we cannot do it life? Are we doing just as much to prepare as if the judgment were to depend on what we are doing—for it is to depend on what we are doing, and doing, and doing, through the whole of life—as much, I say, as if the judgment were to depend on these hourly deeds which we are now performing, on these momentary feelings which we are now cherishing? If not, then there ought to be a revolution in our lives—call it conversion, regeneration, a change of heart—I care not by what name; but I say that there ought to be a revolution in our lives, of such magnitude and moment, that the eternal judgment only can declare it! Are we, then, habitually ready to die? If not habitually, we never are, for religion is a habit. If not habitually, if not at least habitually *making* ourselves ready, there is reason to fear that we never shall be; for life—do you not perceive?—is a tissue of thoughts, purposes, and feelings, which is growing stronger as it lengthens, so that the disinclination to prepare for death is growing every moment, while every moment the time for it lessens.

There is a vague notion—for it is the hope of all that death will not break into the midst of life—a vague notion, with many, of retiring in advancing years from the cares and business of life to make this preparation, which involves great and hazardous mistake. They seem to think that the heart will become pure, and spiritual, and heavenly, as the state of life becomes quiet and free from the urgency of worldly

cares. Delusive expectation!—as if all growth in nature were not most vigorous amidst calm and silence: as if, in like manner, the rooted passions of the soul were not likely to grow stronger and more stubborn amidst the silence and quietude of declining years! What is the fact? Did you ever see selfishness, or avarice, or a worldly mind, lose its accustomed power in such circumstances? On the contrary, we know—who has not witnessed sad and striking instances of it?—we know that nothing is more common than for avarice and worldliness to find strength in leisure, and freedom in retirement; that they fix a stronger grasp upon the decaying faculties, and fling their icy bonds over the soul amidst the winter of age. As well might the Ethiopian change his complexion by retiring from the scorching sun to his shaded hut; as soon might the leopard lose his spots barely by plunging into the solitudes of the wilderness, when the flood could not wash them away. —The waters of death are not waters of ablution, but rather do they give the colouring and complexion to our destiny. They are not a slow and oblivious stream, but rather a rushing torrent that bears us away before we are aware. Death comes suddenly to all. It does break sooner or later into the midst of life. It comes at a time when we think not. It comes, not when all our plans are ready for it; not with harbingers, and prophecies, and preparations; not with a heart-thrilling message, saying, "Set thy house in order, for this year thou shalt die;" no voice is in the infectious breath of the air that brings contagion and death with it; no coming step startles us when disease is approaching; no summoning hand knocks at the gate of life, when its last dread foe is about to enter its dark and guarded passages; no monitory conviction within, says, "This month, this week I shall die!" No, it comes at a time when we think not; it comes upon an unprepared hour, unless our life be preparation; it finds us with all our faults, with all our sins about us; it finds us that which life has made us—finds us such as the very action, habit, and spirit of life have made us —and bids us die such as we lived!

Who of *you* will meet his end when he expects it? Perhaps not one. Or, if you should, how solemn a message would you address to the living! Who of us has, in our own apprehension, been brought to such a crisis, but has had thoughts, which no language can utter, on this momentous concern? We felt that then was not the time to prepare. "Oh! not now—not here!" is the language of the dying man, as, with broken utterance, and the failing and faltering breath of life he testifies his last conviction, "Not now—not here, is the place or the time to prepare for death!" And he feels, too, that all which the world contains vanishes into nothing compared with this preparation! Are we then prepared?—not by a preternatural or extravagant state of feeling; not by glooms, nor by raptures, nor by any assurance, nor by any horror of mind; but by the habitual and calm discharge of our duty, by labours of kindness, by the spirit of devotion, by a temper of mind kindred to that heaven which we hope to enter! Are we thus ready, every day, every hour? On the exchange, in the office, in the study, in the house, and by the way; in the workshop, and in the field, are we ever ready? Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh, shall find watching; and if he shall come in the second watch or in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants."

ON DELAY IN RELIGION.

Acts xxiv. 25: "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

Thus answered Felix when Paul "reasoned of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come." So impressive was the expostulation that, as we are told, "Felix trembled;" and yet so strong was his love of indulgence and ease, that, though shaken by the terrors of conscience, he could say, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

This, my friends, is not a solitary instance in the history of human conduct. Felix, the easy sensualist, the self-indulging worldling, the negligent excuser of himself, has more followers, we must fear, than Paul, the fearless preacher. There are more to resist the voice of conscience than to urge its reproof.

Yet there are times of admonition—even though the lips of every other teacher were silent—there are times of *God's* admonition that come to all. The events of life, or the fears of death, sometimes arouse the most careless. The stern call of adversity compels attention; or the time of escape from danger, of relief from sickness, or of full and overflowing prosperity, touches with ingenuous feeling, the minds of the most thoughtless. There are seasons, too, of more than ordinary reflection. The conviction sometimes comes with power—we hardly know whence it comes—that our life is hasting away, and that but little time is left to fulfil its duties and to secure its better hopes; or else conscience—like the preacher in our text—conscience comes forth from its prison of long confinement and silence, and reasons with the guilty heart, of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come, till it trembles. Alas! that these eventful hours and moments should glide away like other moments and hours of life, and be lost in the tide of common affairs and events! Yet it is even so. The greatest and most solemn feelings of the human heart *may* pass away and leave no deeper trace than its most idle fancies. Felix trembled; and Agrippa afterwards said in the same judgment-hall, to the same preacher, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian;" and yet these declarations are not the record of the lives of these men, but the record of one awful moment. Again the world rushed in with its cares and pleasures; again indulgence pleaded and pride flattered; and the moment—the moment of promise and of peril—was lost, lost never to be recovered, never to be recalled, perhaps, till the great judgment shall reveal its unspeakable solemnity and consequence.

And do you ask how it is that the most precious moments of our earthly existence are thus lost; how it is that the embryo purposes of duty are destroyed; how it is that what are seemingly the very epochs of our improvement—how it is that the fairest signals of hope become

the monuments of our shame and condemnation? I answer, in the language of all experience and of all Scripture, the reason is to be found in the plea of delay. It is not because any one *resolves* upon sinning and suffering the penalty, but it is because every one is promising future amendment. It is not because the human heart *can* boldly and imperatively silence the "strong monitions" of conscience, but because it can evade them—because it can say to each one of them, successively, "Go thy way for this time. Go thy way, not for ever;" that were too fearful to say; "not for ever—oh no: I will call thee back again; when there is a convenient season I will call for thee; but go thy way for this time."

Let us, then, endeavour to spread out a little this plea of delay, and consider in some particulars its nature.

In the path of transgression, the traveller is always in straits of difficulty, which urge him forward. His way on either side is hedged up, and to his own apprehension, he is always put under the necessity of proceeding. Now this would render him extremely uneasy, and would be quite intolerable, indeed, if the case were never to be any better. But though he is rushing on in a narrow and headlong passage, he always descries a point before him, where, to the eye of his imagination, the path becomes wider; some fair and tranquil spot where he will have leisure to pause and consider. There is never—there never was—there never will be—a course of sinful indulgence, or of sinful neglect, but it has, and for ever will have, marked out somewhere in its progress, *the more convenient season.* There is always a period, but it is never present—there is always a period *coming* when temptation is to intermit its power; when the ever-besetting obstacles to present duty are to be withdrawn. "It is true," says the victim of procrastination, "it is true that religion is a thing which ought to be attended to, and must be; it is true, for instance, that this act of piety, or benevolence, ought to be performed, or that extravagance or indulgence ought to be laid aside, but a number of circumstances," he says, "for the present render it particularly inconvenient. In a little time things will change for the better, and *then* the matter shall most assuredly be attended to."

Or else some evil habit—this very procrastination, indeed, becomes a habit, and one of the most fatal—but some habit of sensual vice is stealing upon the man, who yet maintains an outward decency; and he intends to maintain it. No man in the world less intends to become the victim of violent passion and vile profligacy. But now is not the convenient season to reform. When this time of trouble or of provocation has passed by, for which, at present, he says, "some solace is needed, or some indulgence is lawful," then the evil is to be manfully resisted. Or perhaps the subject of duty is viewed on a larger scale. There are many who feel that they ought to do much more to prepare for a future state than they have been wont to do. They feel that they are not yet Christians; that religion is not with them the concern of chief interest; that prayer is not their pleasure; that God is not the supreme object of love, and fear, and obedience. Something is yet to be done. They are yet to pray, and to care for the soul. They do not intend to leave the world in total neglect of the great and sublime purpose for which they were sent into it. They dare not meet the God of life and of judgment thus. But for the present, the cares of this

world, or the deceitfulness of riches, or the lusts of other things, choke the feeble purpose, and render it fruitless. The pleasures of youth awhile plead for delay in religion; then the business of manhood takes up the excuse; and bequeaths it, in turn, to the infirmities of age. All circumstances admit the promise; none favour the performance of it. There is a time of leisure and tranquillity for meditation and prayer; there is a convenient time; but it is for ever to come. In futurity, with these persons—in futurity, not in present action—is all the hope of salvation. But futurity is eternal. It can promise for ever, and never be required to perform.

Such is the plea of delay. Let us now proceed to consider, in the next place, how it ought to be regarded. And here let me observe that I am not speaking in this discourse to a class of persons, who, in the language of our pulpit, are called sinners; I would speak to all, be they called sinners or Christians, who are conscious that they are delaying to do anything which they ought to do. And there are three characters under which, I think, this habit of mind will appear to you. The plea of delay is one fraught with *guilt*, *delusion*, and *danger*.

I. First, it is a plea fraught with guilt. It is an inexcusable plea. It is by the very acknowledgment of him who employs it—it is emphatically pleading guilty: for it implies the knowledge of duty, and the deliberate purpose to violate it. It is not sinning through haste, ignorance, or mistake. It is not sinning, and afterwards confessing it; but it is a case in which confession goes before the act. It is not reasoning away the conviction of duty, but it is admitting and violating it in the same moment. The language of the procrastinator is in terms like these: "I know that this is my duty,"—for if he does not admit the obligation in question, why does he excuse himself? why not say at once, this is not my duty, and I shall not perform it?—his language, then, is, "I know that this is my duty; I know that my Maker has commanded it; I know that his commands relate to the present moment, and to every moment of my existence; but yet"—but what? we are ready to exclaim—does he in express terms refuse obedience? Does he absolutely say, "I *will* not perform it?" No, not absolutely, but he *virtually* says it in the plea of delay. He resolves to neglect the command of God, though he would not dare to utter the resolution. He resolves to neglect the command of God, though he would not dare, with the slightest whisper, to breathe the resolution into the ear of his neighbour. But remember, my friends, that the language which God regards is not the language of the lips, but of the heart and the life. And if he who knew *not*, and *did* commit things worthy of punishment, shall suffer for it, what shall be the lot of him who knew his Lord's will, who confessed the duty he owed, and prepared not himself?

"Had I not come and spoken unto them," said our Saviour, "they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin." Had not Felix heard Paul, had he not been convinced of righteousness and judgment to come, he would have had less to answer for. But the plea of delay involves in it the very sentence of condemnation; a sentence, which he who uses it, in the very act pronounces against himself.

II. The second characteristic of the plea of delay is its *delusiveness*. It would be too much, perhaps, to say that it is absolutely insincere. None, probably, use it with the secret understanding that it is an ar-

tifice. Men, it is rather to be supposed, are its honest dupes. They sincerely imagine that the time of promised amendment will come.

Now, herein consists the delusion; not only that it is utterly improbable that the time ever will come, but that it is rendered more improbable by this very promise that it shall come. This very expectation of being religious by and bye, is, in fact, the greatest possible occasion for despondency. And so long as it is promised and resolved upon, the thing itself, of course, can never take place. The spirit of the promise, so long as it exists, forbids the very hope of amendment.

For thus I reason. Why cannot the wicked man turn from his wicked way *now?* Why cannot the vicious man dash from his lips the deadly cup, *this moment?* Why cannot the profane man cease to violate the sacred name of his Maker from henceforth? Why cannot the man who is delaying the great duty and interest of life, begin a course of religious virtue and piety this very day, this very hour? Is it because his habits, his passions, his desires are adverse? Without doubt this is the reason. Now, in the name of all that is true and rational, let it be asked—are these evil habits, and passions, and desires, to become more favourable to virtue and purity by *indulgence?* Is the veteran sinner more likely to turn than the stripling in vice? Is an aversion to religion, or to any part of it, to prayer, to watchfulness, to strict virtue; is such an aversion to be conciliated by being indulged and made habitual? Will you pamper the passions into self-denial? Will you exasperate an evil temper into gentleness and kindness? Will you throw up the reins to sin, under a notion that you may, by and bye, more easily restrain it?

Now mark the complicated delusion. It is difficult to reform a wrong habit, or to establish a right one at present, and therefore it is deferred; deferred, let it be remembered, precisely because it is difficult. Delay, at every moment, increases the difficulty. Meanwhile, the mind reposes with self-complacency on its specious purposes; and at last, it is probable, to complete the deception, pleads, in extenuation of its sins, the very purposes which it has violated.

There is a strange fatality attending all moral delinquency, all irreligion, in every form of it. To the transgressor, things never—no, they never appear as they are. In the course of sin, or of sinful neglect, for instance, every human being believes himself to be an exception from all others. "I know, indeed," says the anxious delayer of his duty, "that the time for amendment has never come to thousands who expected it as I do; but mine is to be a different lot. There are many days yet before me, and I intend, I am resolved, one day, to pursue a different course. I do not intend to die as I live." Thus he is led on by the illusions of hope, till he is beyond the reach of this world's great probation. Millions have walked in that way to the regions of moral perdition, yet he is persuaded there is something in his case to distinguish it from them all. And every one of those millions, he knows, entertained the same persuasion; but their failure does not shake his confidence.

Of this miserable delusion the case related in our text, with the circumstances, furnishes a striking example. Felix heard the voice of truth and was troubled. Conscience spoke within him and would not be utterly silenced. He felt—O how solemn with a man in the visita-

tion and the hour of conscience!—he felt that the call must be answered. He felt that he must do something. And how does he meet this necessity—this great, this self-enforced necessity? What answer does he return to the message? Alas! he dismisses it with a *promise!* He says to him who brought it, "Go thy way for this time!" The preacher retired. Why, you are ready to ask, did not the very sound of his departing steps carry alarm to the breast of this anxious inquirer? Ah! it was that delusive promise, "when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." With this he regained his peace of mind, and life passed on as before. In pride, in pleasure, in popular favour, Felix forgot the lonely captive. Day succeeded to day, and month to month; but we hear no more of the fatal promise. But what do we hear? Why, what this same man, this Felix, two years after, "to do the Jews a pleasure," contrary to what he knew to be the dictates of justice and humanity, "left the preacher bound in prison." Thus ended the promise of Felix; and thus, with scarcely an exception, end all pleas of delay in religion.

But do they result in simple mistake? Is it the worst of the case that the delaying sinner deceives himself? No, my friends, delusion in matters of duty is something worse than mistake—it is injury of the most alarming kind.

III. This leads me to the third remark; viz. that the plea of delay is dangerous. Its danger has already in part appeared, but it claims farther attention.

It ought to be considered, not only that the habit of procrastination is nothing else but a habit of deceiving ourselves, but that it is above all others fatal. It were bad enough to postpone our duty, and withal to delude ourselves; but to be morally deceived in being deluded, to make the fair promise of better things the very lure to perdition, to make ourselves the more easy when we are doing the more wrong, to muffle and to keep out of sight the deadly weapon only that it may strike a more secret and a more fatal blow; there is something in this that is well fitted to shock and alarm us. Yet this is the simple statement of what is true in the case of every man who delays to do what he knows that he ought to do. The direct way to make the inclination to sinful indulgence ruinous, is to flatter ourselves with the promise of amendment. There is nothing—for I must repeat and insist upon this observation—there is nothing so completely fatal to every reasonable prospect of being religious, as this promise to be religious at some future time. If it were not for this there might be some hope.

But this promise of amendment is specious. It seems to take off the boldness and impiety of transgression.

This paltering with conscience amuses and stupifies it at the same time. It were infinitely better to say—for bold and impious as it may seem, it would be saying the truth—"I do not obey the commands of God, and I shall not: I am not a Christian, and I do not expect to be one; I have no reason to think that my feelings or habits are to be changed by being cherished; I shall probably—without any immediate endeavour to amend—shall probably be, ten or twenty years hence, only more decidedly and habitually what I am now; I shall almost certainly die as I am now living." This, my friends is the plain and sober truth; and if the conscience could awake to its full and its fearful import, it would not be easily lulled again into the sleep of death.

Withal, and to complete the danger of delay, the work of evil habits is imperceptible and speedy. There is blindness in the way, and it is ever terminated by a fearful precipice.

The progress of gross vice, and its end, are an illustration of the progress of all sin. The man who is plunging into vicious habits will admit to you, perhaps, that the consequences, if he goes on, are tremendous. Consequences? Let them be tremendous. What is that to him? What has he to do with consequences? He does not mean to reach them. He has no intention of proceeding so far. A little indulgence can do him no harm, and it is a very different thing—is it not? —a very different thing from being grossly sottish and vile. That he is determined he never will be. He cannot resolve to leave off just now, and he cannot see that it is at all necessary. He surely has the power of free choice, and he can stop when he pleases. Perhaps he is resolved that he will do so, after he has proceeded to a certain extent. He is not so blind as his friends think he is, and as some good people and some worthy preachers would represent. He knows all that you can tell him. He claims one distinction at least among the vicious. He is not a fool. He is not without his thoughts.

Thus he reasons; and while he reasons, habit strengthens; and ruin overtakes him before he is aware. His reputation is suddenly gone; disease has secretly sapped the foundations of his firmness and strength; and death surprises him with its ghastly visage before he is aware that he is *declining* from the path of health, and enjoyment, and life. "He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy!"

Besides, if the plea of delay were not thus hazardous; if it did not appear as if invented on purpose to ensure the ruin of its victim; if it were ever so promising; if the work of evil habits were not so imperceptible and speedy; still there is the danger of a total uncertainty about the continuance of life. If you *should* appoint a time when you are to commence that better life of piety and prayer of which you are thinking, that time may be too late. The expected day will come, indeed; but it may shine upon your grave. For what is your life? It is a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. I have seen it rise; the beam of morning kindled it; but the beam that kindled, dissolved and dissipated it for ever! Such is life. It appeareth for a little time; and the only certainty about the length of its actual continuance is, that it is totally uncertain. To-morrow's sun may melt it away. A breath of wind may scatter it. The touch of death may at any moment dissolve it. At any moment, this phantom life may disappear, and eternity break in upon the delusive dream of promised amendment.

And is this brief and hasty hour of our being the season for delay? Do we employ ourselves in delays when we have hardly time to act? Do the already frail and dying *delay* their preparation for sickness and death? If some thousands of years were allotted to us on earth there might be a show of reason—and yet if what we have said be true, *only* a *show* of reason—in deferring. But what shall we think of it when the time is all too short for resolution and for action?

And yet, perhaps, with some of us, the period of life that is past has been up to this time a period of delay. We have, many of us, not been

more religious and devout, more correct and virtuous, more humble, kind, and forbearing, more faithful and blameless in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, not because we never intend to be so, but because we are delaying to be so. We are still saying to conscience and to the command of God, and to all the kind and all the awful messages of Providence, "Go thy way for this time."

When shall this inexpressible—I had almost said, this insufferable—folly of indecision be given up? When will men cease to seal their destruction under the promise of escaping it? There *are* but two states of mind on this subject that can for an instant stand the test of reason—either to resolve never to lead a life of piety and virtue, or to begin that life this very day. Any other course is such manifest infatuation as cannot in reason be entertained for a moment. And dreadful as the alternative to the right choice is, I would press every mind to it, I would throw everything upon that cast rather than leave the issue to that fatal indecision which will not even lift its hand to choose. I adjure you, tell us not any longer of a more convenient season. I put this matter to your reason. I will use no tender exhortation, no soft entreaty now, though our blessed religion is full of such. I put this matter to stern and solemn reason: and I say—resolve to begin the religious life now,—or take the uttermost hazard of perdition!

ARGUMENTS FOR

RENEWED DILIGENCE IN RELIGION.

(PREACHED ON THE LAST SABBATH OF THE YEAR.)

ROMANS xiii. 11: "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep."

SIN is here compared to a sleep. It is the sleep of the soul; the sleep not of the senses, for they are often in these circumstances intensely alive and awake to their objects—but the sleep of the soul. It is the insensibility, the lethargy, the death-like stupor of the higher, the moral, the immortal nature. In this sleep of the soul there is the same insensibility to spiritual things as in natural sleep there is to natural things. To the *natural* sleeper all the objects around him, be they ever so interesting, and splendid, and wonderful; all that would otherwise occupy his hands, or engage his thoughts, or delight his vision; all the voices of active and stirring life around him; all the ministrations of nature; all the magnificence of heaven; to him are no more than if they were blotted out of existence. He sees not, he hears not, he feels nothing, he pursues nothing; he has no desires, nor fears, nor hopes; though the crowded world of objects, and interests, and changes, and operations, is all about him, and heaven, thronged with all its glorious spheres, is stretched over him, yet they are no more to him than to the insensible clod. So it is with the moral sleeper. There *is* a world of moral realities, interesting, glorious, and wonderful; there is a world of spiritual visions and voices all around him; but to his ear, and his eye, and his heart, and his consciousness, they are nothing. Though these realities of spiritual life and beauty, these glories of the spiritual nature and of the everlasting gospel, are fairer and richer than all the treasures of earth, and brighter than all the splendours of heaven, yet he sees not this, and he believes it not.

Are not *many* thus asleep? Are they not all around us, reposing in bowers of worldly ease, stretched on couches of worldly indulgence, lulled by the viol of pleasure, fanned by breezes of prosperity, bewildered by phantoms of ambition, or darkly and blindly struggling with evils, with trials, and with sorrows, yet all sunk more or less deeply in this death-like slumber of the soul? Let us pursue the inquiry and the comparison.

The moral, like the natural sleeper, has dreams. And he dreams of realities. Yes, the great realities—heaven and hell, the soul's worth, and treasure, and destiny, and danger, to many a man are nothing but dreams. They pass before him, like the visions of the night; but they engage no waking energy, nor earnest or constant pursuit. The vision

of religious truths and objects is sometimes, perhaps, awful and alarming; but still, though disturbed and partially awakened, he is asleep; his mind is aroused only to momentary consciousness; only enough aroused to say, and to feel relieved by saying, "it is a dream." He is glad that the impression does not last with him. He shakes from him the transient sense of these realities, as if they were the merest delusions. Yes, to the moral sleeper, the connexion of the future with the present, the tissue of these daily thoughts and feelings, that is binding him to future welfare or woe—the web of destiny—is but "such stuff as dreams are made of."

The moral sleeper, too, like the natural, is not only disturbed, or perchance delighted, with the visions of his sleep, but he is sometimes more fully awakened. The strong hand of affliction is laid upon him, or the rough hand of danger shakes him from his deep slumbers; or his fellow-sleeper, perhaps, begins to awake, and to arouse himself, and he is partially awakened: but he dislikes the interruption; he is angry and peevish at the disturbance, or he feebly promises, saying,—in the words which an ancient prophet, as if he were, indeed, a prophet for all future time, hath put into the mouth of just such a sleeper—saying, "a *little* more sleep, a *little* more slumber; I will awake soon;" and then he sinks into a still deeper repose, from which, it may be, nothing but the shock of death will ever arouse him!

For, *is* not the sleep of sin—notwithstanding these interruptions and these dreams—*is* not the sleep of sin still heavy upon him, who is, after all, insensible to truth, insensible to spiritual objects and affections, insensible to sin itself? There is that in every man's heart which should make him sigh, and weep, and tremble; and is he not morally asleep if he is insensible to it?—if he does not arouse himself to contend against his spiritual foes, to watch over his moral maladies, to keep his too much and too long neglected heart with all diligence? There is that, also, within every man which should make him rejoice and glory—the power and privilege which God gives him of recovery to virtue, and piety, and heaven—the traces of a divine original—the spark which, kindled, may glow and brighten for ever;—yes, it is that which should make him rejoice, and hope, and aspire; which should bow him to awe, and melt him to thanksgiving; which should make him feel that he has within him a trust and a treasure more honourable and precious than all the goods and distinctions of the world. And if he is insensible to all this; if he does nothing for his inward welfare; if he does not watch nor strive; if he does not even fear or pray; is he not, in regard to that precious, that better nature, asleep? Does not the soul sleep when its truest and noblest interests are the interests most of all left out of sight and neglected? Is not the eye of the soul closed, and its ear heavy with slumber, when it sees and hears nothing of all that which should most of all arouse, and awe, and gladden, and transport it?

Perhaps some may think that the picture is overdrawn; and, for the spiritual condition of many, we may hope that it is. And we do not say, you will observe, that in *any* the sleep is profound and undisturbed; but, nevertheless, how deep it is, we may not properly apprehend, because we do not consider what it is to be properly awake to the soul.

What is it to be awake to the soul?—Let us see what it is to be awake in *worldly* things. How clear is the vision of men when directed to

their outward interests! How keenly do they discriminate—how accurately do they judge—how eagerly do they pursue! It needs no Sabbaths, no set times, to meditate on stocks, and bargains, and speculations. It needs no sermons to remind men of these things. Every sense, and member, and faculty is awake, and alive, and intensely employed, in the earnest toil and competition of life. Here are no faint impressions, no dim perceptions, no doubts, no objections, no evasions. To the worldly, it may be said—to those of the worldly who now hear me, I may say—you are all inquiring how you shall do more, and gain more; not excusing yourselves, and striving to do the least that will satisfy your own minds; not excusing yourselves, and putting off business, as you put off duty, upon your neighbour; and saying it may be proper for this, and that, and the other man, to go forward, and do business, and get gain. No, you grasp at the bare chance of worldly profit. You step manfully forward, not waiting for others, not walking timidly and doubtfully, and straining your eyes to detect, on every side, shapes of evil and danger, as men who are half-asleep. No; you are not irresolute, nor doubtful, nor cowardly about these things. You have no fear of pledges and promises, and forms of promise in business; no fear of bonds, and notes, and covenants, in transactions where the whole heart is interested. Many have not half enough fear of these things.

But, alas! how different from all this wakeful zeal and activity, and readiness, and forwardness, and courage, and manly decision, is the ordinary pursuit of religious things! Here, alas! men have doubts. They do not see things clearly; they are afraid of some evil lying in wait; they are afraid of forms, and covenants, and sacramental vows; they doubt about prayer; they doubt about public worship; they question whether they shall not get just as much good at home; above all, they doubt about religious undertakings, and efforts, and charities. It is quite a matter of speculation, they think, whether any good will be done. The case is completely reversed from what it is in worldly things. A speculation, there, is a grand chance for the acquisition of goods; but, in religious things, the noblest chance for infinite good to ourselves and others is but a doubtful speculation. If there is adventure, or experiment, or speculation here, a thousand voices are raised against it; while the whole business of life is more or less a *business* of adventure and risk. If it is proposed to send the gospel to China or Hindoostan, why it is a great way off, and the people are a strange people, and the success is doubtful; but there is no great difficulty in fitting out ships to send merchandise to China or Hindoostan. If it is proposed to form an association to relieve and instruct the poor at home, the subject is environed with difficulties and doubts; but a company for speculation in golden mines or golden visions can be formed without difficulty and without prudence.

"They that sleep," says the apostle, speaking literally, "sleep in the night." And is there not a *spiritual* night brooding over the minds of thousands? There is nothing in the world so glorious as the perfection of God; there is nothing so near as his presence; and yet how many habitually walk in the sense and presence of everything but the ever-manifested and omnipresent Divinity! Eyes have they, but they see not; and ears have they, but they hear not. They see all objects,

but see them not as the tokens of his power. They hear, but they hear not the voice of God. They hear everything but those calls that are made upon the soul—the calls of blessing, and trial, and temptation, and warning, and encouragement, that are all around them. They mark everything in the paths of life but those directions, and commands, and exhortations, that constantly address themselves to the spiritual nature. They see not, at every step, duties, mercies, privileges, means of virtuous improvement, opportunities of usefulness, cares of the soul to be taken, cares of other men's good and true welfare, dangers admonishing them, blessed hopes beckoning them onward, heaven opening to them. They do not walk in the abiding and the living sense of these things.

This it would be, in some measure, to be awake to the soul. But what would it be altogether, our perceptions of the soul and its interests are, perhaps, too dull for us to tell, or to comprehend. Well may we suspect that our standard of religious wakefulness and diligence is far too low. Well may we suspect that we do not yet know what it is to be awake to all the glorious and affecting concerns of our moral and immortal welfare; and that, if we were once thus awakened, everything in this world would appear in a new light; we should see with new eyes, we should apprehend with new senses, we should be aroused to an impression more profound and overwhelming than ever this outward world has made upon us. If, indeed, we can so strongly grasp this world; if we can so strongly apprehend, and so eagerly pursue the mere forms of things, the vanities that perish in the using, the trifles of a day; with what ardour and intensity would the soul put forth its powers, when it once laid hold on realities! If the charms of pleasure can so fascinate men, how would the beauties of virtue enrapture them! If glittering gold can so dazzle them, how would they gaze, if they saw them, upon the riches of holy truth, and life, and immortality! If the most ordinary good news can so delight them, what would the gospel do! If earth can win and bind all their warm affections and sympathies, how would heaven bear away their thoughts to more delightful meditations, to more holy friendships, to more blessed hopes, to more ineffable visions of beauty and beatitude, than all that this world ever unfolded, or offered, to its most ardent votaries! Then would worldly desire, and love, and zeal, be more than transformed; they would be regenerated to new life and power. He upon whom this happy renewal of the soul should pass, would find that nobler energies had slept within him than he had before imagined to be a part of himself. He would come to feel that he had undervalued the gift of being. He would thank God, as he never before thanked him, for the blessing of existence, and the promise of immortality.

But I must check myself in the course of these reflections, to consider how urgent is the call for this awakening from the sleep of spiritual negligence, and stupidity, and death.

"Knowing the time," says the apostle, "that it is now high time to awake out of sleep."

In the first place, then, if we intend ever to do more for our spiritual welfare, it is time that we were doing it; it is now time that we were doing it; and it may be the only time. If we entertain the purpose of being more diligent in devotion, private or public; of keeping a stricter watch

over our consciences; of more effectually controlling sinful passions, and correcting sinful habits; of taking a more decided stand in conversation, and avowal, and practice, as Christians; it is high time that the purpose was accomplished, and the work done. If we ever make amends for wrong, or recompense for injury, or restitution of dishonest gains; or would tender forgiveness to our enemy, or heal the breaches of confidence, or the wounds that unkindness has given; or would comfort the distressed and suffering; or would send alms to the destitute, to kindle the fire on the cold hearth, or to spread with our abundance the table of penury: if we would do anything of this, or aught else, that our conscience dictates, or our hand finds to do, let us remember, that there is no time to be lost, and that what we do we must do quickly.

In the next place, it is time, and it is high time that we do our duty, whatever it is, inasmuch as it is a matter of the most pressing concern. Our soul's welfare is to be secured, and it brooks not delay. The very errand of life is to be done, and it must not be put off. Happiness and misery, heaven and hell, wait upon our decision; and happiness and misery, heaven and hell, are not things to be trifled with! The messengers of Providence are around us; blessings, afflictions, dangers, invite, admonish, threaten us; God calls, good men entreat, Jesus hath lifted up to all ages the cry of wisdom, and warning, and agony; and these are arguments and appeals that endure not resistance nor insensibility. Everything is at stake; the trial of the soul is passing; diligence only can safely abide it: watchfulness only can bring it to a happy issue; and we must not sleep in fatal security!

This is not merely solemn, and, at the same time, unmeaning language. Look within, and see if a trial is not there actually and hourly passing between the right and the wrong; between the happy affections and the miserable; between the spiritual and the sensual, the heavenly and the worldly. What consequences are depending, future years, future ages, death, judgment, eternity, only can tell. Oh! that some other language than mortals use for mortal purposes might aid us to speak forth the might, the magnificence, the immensity of these themes! "Awake"—it is reason that calls, it is the better nature that pleads, it is a voice as awful as the trump of the angel of judgment, that cries—"awake, O thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead!"

It is high time, in the third place, because too much time is already lost. With some, twenty years; with some thirty; with some, forty, fifty years, have passed; and they have done nothing effectually for the soul's welfare. So many years of promises, and excuses, and evasions, but not one year, not one month, of habitual prayers, and daily resistance of evil, and wakeful discharge of the great spiritual trust! They were lengthened out for this very end; and this, amidst all the activity of life, has been the only object habitually neglected. How blessed would have been the remembrance of these years, if they had all been devoted to virtue, to purity, and heaven; if their whole course had been a course of kind words, and good deeds, and holy prayers; if their brightening progress had gladdened the sorrowful, and inspired the languid in virtue, and led and helped on "the sacramental part of God's elect;" if every step of them had brought the pilgrim of virtue and faith nearer to the company of the faithful and blessed in heaven! —the toil, and business, and pleasure of life need not have paused; but

that toil, and business, and pleasure, might have been consecrated and blessed by a heavenly aim.

Can any being, claiming the attributes of reason, say that, compared with this, the case of spiritual indifference and sloth is not gloomy? What should we think, if twenty years of our life had been passed in blank and barren idiotcy? And when we awaked from that stupor and sleep of the soul, how should we regard the time that had thus passed? But, compared with twenty years of growing irreligion and vice, that lot would be a blessing. In that case no blame could attach, and no reproach would follow, and no retribution would call the unhappy victim to its bar. Twenty years of sickness would be accounted a sad lot; and yet that might have saved the soul for ever. But twenty years of spiritual maladies, to which no healing or help has come; twenty, thirty, forty years, in which a man has grown no better—a common case, I most seriously fear—in which no holy principles of action have been gained, no passions subdued, no communion with God has been sought, no preparation for trouble, and sickness, and death has been made, no meetness for heaven has been acquired!—truly, well might the Apostle say to his converts, "Let the time past suffice, wherein ye have wrought the will of the Gentiles." Is it not—O negligent man! O sinful sleeper!—is it not enough? Canst thou ask more time to be thus wasted and lost? If thou canst, when will thy wakening be? When, and where? If thou wilt not arise now from this spiritual lethargy, thy wakening may be when to all human view it is too late; and where the last failing voices of mercy may arouse you only to horror and despair!

When and where I say not; but this I know, that every hour of this awful repose is an hour of added peril. It is high time to awake from this sleep, in the fourth place, because there is infinite danger in it. Sleep, if thou wilt, on the brink of a precipice; sleep on the mountain's brow, with a yawning chasm beneath you; sleep on the sea-shore, when the roaring tide is coming in with a flood to overwhelm you: but let no man sleep amidst the mountain precipices and chasms of this world's temptations; let no man sleep amidst the whelming tides of passion. Those outward dangers are but symbols of a danger internal, spiritual, and great, beyond the power of any comparison to set forth. If you saw a fellow-being in those perilous situations, you would fly to his rescue; or you would be struck with horror at the danger which you could not avert. But, if you are a negligent transgressor of God's commands, a careless offender against your own conscience, an easy yielder to sinful indulgence, you have infinitely more reason to tremble for yourself. Ruin is not more certainly in the path of the devouring sea, than it is in the path and course of unholy passions and sinful indulgences.

And what a ruin is it?—not of the body, but of the soul; not of merchandize, but of virtue; not of gold and silver, but of those affections which, rightly regulated, are richer—sacred heaven! how poorly was I about to speak! richer than gold and silver, was I ready to say? —nay, richer than all the suns and stars of the firmament. What a ruin is that which is found in the brand that sinful gratifications leave on the soul; in the blight and curse of an envious mind; in the seared and callous heart of avarice; in the meanness of selfish

competitions; in the baseness of living on the world's favour; in the barrenness of an unsatisfied and desolated mind; in the darkness of a soul estranged and alienated from its Maker! We talk of ruin; but there is no ruin like that, no desolation like that, which enters into the chambers of the soul; no ruin like that which lays waste the spiritual temple; no scourge like that which passes over the immortal nature. All misery like that which sin causes, is in its nature occasional, temporary, transient; it does not belong to the mind, but only to its condition. But that misery which sin creates, becomes a part of the soul; it will cling to the mind till the last trace of evil habit is worn away by repentance.

It is high time to awake, then, because now is the only time we may have for it; because a matter of infinite weight presses; because too much time has been lost; and because every added moment of spiritual sloth is a moment added to peril.

Once more, let us be admonished that it is high time to awake, by the tokens of the closing year. The season which we are approaching, is a time of congratulations and kind tokens of remembrance; and be it so. But let the great admonition of the season sink deeper into our minds than congratulations, and become an abiding memorial within us, more precious than all the offerings of friendship. Let the compliments of the season be paid, and let them pass, as they will pass; but so let not the solemn mementos of the coming season pass away from us. These years, Christian brethren, are hurrying us away. I say not this gloomily, nor to communicate gloom; but to awaken from indifference, and arouse to exertion. What shall startle us from our sloth and negligence, if these epochs of our hasting life shall not? Most of us, it may be, imagine that a time will come when we shall be more zealous, and earnest, and decided. But when shall it once be? and what shall awaken us to it, if not the remembrance of lost time, and the present and urgent tokens of its hasty flight? Well saith the poet,—

"It is the signal that demands despatch;
How much is to be done! My hopes and fears
Start up alarmed; and o'er life's narrow verge
Look down—on what? A fathomless abyss,
A dread eternity, how surely mine!

"Seize, then, the present moments;
For, be assured, they all are messengers;
And though their flight be silent, and their paths trackless,
As the winged couriers of the air,
They post to heaven, and there record thy folly:
Because, though stationed on the important watch,
Thou like a sleeping, faithless sentinel,
Didst let them pass unnoticed, unimproved.
And know, for thou that slumberest on the guard,
Thou shalt be made to answer at the bar
For every fugitive.

"Then stay the present instant;
Imprint the mark of wisdom on its wings.
Oh! let it not elude thy grasp, but like
The good old patriarch upon record,
Hold the fleet angel fast, until he bless thee."

COMPASSION FOR THE SINFUL.

MARK iii. 5: "And when he had looked round about him with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand."

THAT part of this passage only which relates to the moral temper of our Saviour, is proposed for your present meditations. It is, in other words, and especially, the compassion of Jesus.

In reading the first clause of the sentence—he "looked round about him with anger"—I suppose that many may have felt an emotion, a thrill almost of pain and doubt; they have felt that these words, by themselves, and in their simple meaning, were in painful contrast with all their ideas of our Saviour's meekness and patience; they have been ready to doubt whether the words could have been correctly translated. But how entirely and delightfully is the mind relieved by the words that follow—"being grieved for the hardness of their hearts!" He was indignant as he looked around him, and witnessed the bitter enmity, and the base hypocrisy of the Jews; but his indignation instantly softened into pity; he was grieved at the hardness of their hearts.

This is one instance of that sublime moral harmony—that union in which the most opposite qualities met and mingled—that so entirely singles out from all other models, the character of our heavenly Teacher and Master. We recognise the same spirit with that which was so pathetically manifested in his appeal to Jerusalem—"O Jerusalem! Jerusalem!—thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent to thee." Here is the tone of indignation, and reproach; but mark how instantly it is redeemed from the ordinary character of those sentiments—"thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent to thee; how often would I have gathered thy children, even as a hen gathereth her brood under her wing, but ye would not!"

The spirit with which we should regard the faults and sins of mankind is nearly a neglected subject in morals; and it had been well for moral reformers and preachers of righteousness, if they had more thoroughly considered it. It is, moreover, a very practical subject to all men; for we are constantly brought into contact with the faults and transgressions of mankind; every day offers, from this cause, some annoyance to our feelings, or some injury to our interests; every newspaper that is taken in our hand is burdened with the recital of crimes —robberies, murders, piracies, wars. Indeed, this constant experience of injustice or exasperation, in some or other of their forms, and this

extensive observation of human wickedness, are a part of our moral discipline; and it becomes us to consider how we should meet it, and be made better by other men's faults. It is, indeed, in its mildest form, a sad and grievous discipline, from which no one should be willing to come out unprofited.

There is another general observation applicable to this subject. As we advance in our moral discriminations, we shall always find that things, before indifferent, become interesting; and things distant, it may be added, become near. A war, for instance, breaks out between distant nations. A man may say—what is that to me? What is the case of the French and the Austrians, of the Russians and the Poles, to me? I answer it is much to you: for every time you read an account of a battle; every time you read of the prowess of armies, of blood and carnage, of blazing battlements, and groaning hospitals, you have certain feelings; and they are marked with a strong, moral complexion. You are pleased or pained, you exult, or you regret, or you are indifferent; and to any refined moral sensibility, these states of mind will not be unimportant. Or, an extensive fraud in some public institution, although it may not touch you in your interests, does touch you in your feelings; and therefore does concern, though not your pecuniary, yet your moral welfare. And while others think that they have nothing to do but with words; nothing to do, but to talk, and speculate, and wonder, and rail; a thoughtful man will feel that he has much to do with his own heart. Or, when the poor miserable victim of vice, the shattered wreck of a man, appears before the public eye, he may be contemplated with laughter and scorn; but from a man who breathes the spirit of the Christian Master, that spectacle will draw forth deeper sentiments. It is the form of sacred humanity that is before him; it is an erring fellow-being; it is a desolate, forlorn, forsaken soul; and the thoughts of good men, that gather around that poor wretch, will be far deeper than those of indifference or scorn. And, in fine, all human offences,—that whole system of dishonesty, evasion, circumventing, forbidden indulgence, and intriguing ambition, in which men are struggling together, will often be looked upon, by a thoughtful observer, not merely as the sphere of mean toils and strifes, but as the mighty, and to a Christian eye, the solemn, conflict of minds immortal, for ends vast and momentous as their own being. Sad and unworthy strife, indeed! and let it be viewed with indignation; but let that indignation, too, melt into pity.

Such, indeed, is the spirit recommended in our text—a spirit of indignation at human faults and follies; but a spirit, too, which leans to pity—a feeling which, although it begins often with indignation, always, by the aids of reflection and piety, *ends* in pity.

There *is* a portion of indignation in the right temper. The right feeling is not a good-natured easiness at the transgressions of men, nor a worldly indifference, nor a falsely philosophic coldness, that puts on an air of reasoning, and says, "it must be so," and "men were made so," and "this is what we must expect." Neither is it a worldly laxity of conscience, that accounts everything well that passes under the seal of public opinion. It is a decided and strong moral feeling, that ought to be awakened by human wickedness. It is indignation.

But then it is not a harsh and cruel feeling; it is not peevishness nor irritation; it is not hasty nor angry reproach; it is not a feeling that delights in denunciation. No; but the words of warning fall, as they did from the lips of Jesus, mingled with lamentation. Or, the words of reproach are uttered as they were by Paul, when he told the Philippians, and told them even weeping, that some among them were enemies of the cross of Christ.

There are other mistakes which we are liable to commit, and other wrong feelings which we are prone to cherish, towards the erring and guilty.

Good men—shall I say it?—are too proud of their goodness. Here are you, a respectable individual in society. Dishonour comes not near you. Your countenance has weight and influence. Your robe is unstained. The poisonous breath of calumny has never been breathed upon your fair name. Ah! How easy is it to look down with scorn upon the poor, degraded offender; to pass by him with a lofty step; to draw up the folds of your garment around you, that it may not be soiled by his touch! Yet the great Master of virtue did not so: but he descended to familiar intercourse with publicans and sinners.

There is a feeling, I say, not only of scorn, but of triumph, often springing up from the survey of other men's faults. Many seem to think themselves better for all the sins they can detect in others. And when they are going over the catalogue of their neighbour's unhappy derelictions of temper or conduct, there is often, amidst much apparent concern, a secret exultation, that poisons and blasts all their pretensions to wisdom and moderation, and their claims even to virtue itself. Nay, this feeling goes so far, that men take actual pleasure in the sins of others. It is not the corrupt man only—it is not the seducer into the path of evil only—that does this; but it is every man whose thoughts are often employed in agreeable comparisons of his virtues with the faults of his neighbour.

The power over men's faults, which is lost by a harsh or haughty treatment of them, would of itself form a great subject; and one that much needs to be commended to all those who would exert any moral influence over their fellow-beings. The power of gentleness, the subduing influence of pity, the might of love, the control of mildness over passion, the commanding majesty of that perfect character which mingles grave displeasure with grief and pity for the offender—these things have been too little seen in the world. I believe that our pulpits, and our tribunals of justice, and parental authority among us, must put on a new aspect, before they will appear in all their dignity, their venerableness, their power and beauty. We scarcely know, as yet, what we might do with men's passions and vices. They are commonly reputed, and some of them in particular, to be untameable, incorrigible, and fated to procure the ruin of their victims; and they are in part made so, by our wrong treatment of them. The human heart cannot yield to such an influence as we too often endeavour to exert upon it. It was not made to bow willingly to what is merely human; at least not to what is infirm and wrong in human nature. If it yields to us, it must yield to what is divine in us. The wickedness of my neighbour cannot submit to my wickedness; his sensuality, for instance, cannot submit to my anger against his vices. My faults are not the instruments that are to

correct his faults. And it is hence that impatient reformers, and denouncing preachers, and hasty reprovers, and angry parents, and irritable relatives, so often fail, in their several departments, to reclaim the erring.

I would, therefore, remind them that they have a new lesson to learn from the compassion of Jesus; and that is, while they permit in themselves the liveliest sensibility to the sins of men, to mingle with it the deepest commiseration for them.

I. And they may learn this lesson—they may find it enforced rather, first, by considering what it is that their feelings and thoughts are exercised about.

It is sin—it is combined guilt and misery—it is the supreme evil. Whence shall we gather comparisons to set it forth? Shall we name sickness?—Sickness belongs to the body, the corruptible and perishable body. Pain?—physical pain?—The body is its instrument and end. Loss, disappointment?—They are worldly accidents. Dishonour?—It is, comparatively, a shade upon a name. But a moral offence possesses all these characters, and it attaches them all to the soul. It is sickness, it is pain, it is loss, it is dishonour, in the immortal part. It is guilt; and it is misery added to guilt. It is calamity in itself; and it brings upon itself, in addition, the calamity of God's displeasure, and the abhorrence of all righteous beings, and the soul's own abhorrence. If you have to deal with this evil, deal faithfully, but patiently and tenderly with it. This is no matter for petty provocation, nor for personal strife, nor for selfish irritation.

Speak kindly to your erring brother. God pities him; Christ has died for him; Providence waits for him; the mercy of heaven yearns towards him; and the spirits of heaven are ready to welcome him back with joy. Let your voice be in unison with all those powers that God is using for his recovery.

Parent! speak gently to your offending child. This trait of parental duty should be deeply pondered. A tone of grave rebuke should, indeed, be sometimes used: perhaps, occasion may require that it should be often used; but the tone of peevish complaint and anger, never. There is a different language; and how much more powerful! "Ah! my child!" might one say, in the manner, if not in language—"my child! what injury is all this doing you!—this passion, this violence, or this vice, what a bitter cup is it preparing for you!" This language, this tone, from the grave wisdom of a father, or the tender anxiety of a mother, might have saved some whom peevishness and provocation have driven farther and deeper into the ways of transgression.

But let us put the strongest case. Your neighbour has done you grievous wrong; and he has the face to tell you so, and to exult in his dishonesty. What man is there whose countenance would not be flushed with momentary indignation, at being so confronted with one that had injured him, and that gloried in the injury! And let us concede thus much to the weakness of nature, or even to the first impulse of virtue. But the next feeling should be unfeigned regret and pity. Yes, the man who stands before you, triumphing in a prosperous fraud and palpable wrong, is the most pitiable of human beings. He has done himself a deeper, a far deeper injury, than he has done to you.

It is the inflicter of wrong, not the sufferer, whom God beholds with mingled displeasure and compassion; and his judgment should be your law. Where amidst the benedictions of the Holy Mount, is there one for this man? But upon the merciful—the peacemakers—the persecuted—they are poured out freely; these are the sacred names upon which the spirit and blessing of Jesus descend.

II. In the next place, it may temper the warmth of our indignation against sin, and soften it into pity; it may well bring us, indeed, to imitate the compassion of Jesus, for us to reflect that whatever others are, and however bad, we, in other circumstances, might have been as they are.

We are all men of like passions, propensities, exposures. There are elements in us all which might have been perverted through the successive processes of moral deterioration to the worst of crimes. The wretch whom the execration of the thronging crowd pursues to the scaffold or the gibbet, is not worse than any one of that multitude might have become in similar circumstances. He is to be condemned, indeed; but how much he is to be pitied, let his burning passions, his consuming remorse, his pallid cheek, his sinking head, the mingled apathy and agony of his apprehensions—let these tell.

I feel that I am speaking of a case that is fully practical. There is a vindictive feeling in society towards convicted and capital offenders, towards those who are doomed to abide the awful severity of the law, that does not become the frail and the sinful. I do not adopt the unqualified language that it is nothing but the grace of God that saves us from being as bad as the worst of criminals. But it is certain that we owe much to the good providence of God, ordaining for us a lot more favourable to virtue. It is certain that we all had that within us, that might have been pushed to the same excess; and therefore a silent pity and sorrow for the victim should mingle with our detestation of the crime.

The very pirate that dyes the ocean-wave with the blood of his fellow-beings, that meets with his defenceless victim in some lonely sea, where no cry for help can be heard, and plunges his dagger to the heart which is pleading for life,—which is calling upon him by all the names of kindred, of children and home, to spare—yes, the very pirate is such a man as you or I might have been. Orphanage in childhood; an unfriended youth; an evil companion; a resort to sinful pleasure; familiarity with vice; a scorned and blighted name; seared and crushed affections; desperate fortunes;—these are steps that might have led any one among us to unfurl upon the high seas the bloody flag of universal defiance; to have waged war with our kind; to have put on the terrific attributes, to have done the dreadful deeds, and to have died the awful death of the ocean robber. How many affecting relationships of humanity plead with us to pity him! That head that is doomed to pay the price of blood, once rested upon a mother's bosom. The hand that did that accursed work, and shall soon be stretched, cold and nerveless, in the felon's grave, was once taken and cherished by a father's hand, and led in the ways of sportive childhood, and innocent pleasure. The dreaded monster of crime has once been the object of sisterly love, and all domestic endearment. Pity him, then. Pity his blighted hope, and his crushed heart. It is a wholesome sensibility;

it is reasonable; it is meet for frail and sinning creatures like us to cherish; it foregoes no moral discrimination; it feels the crime, but feels it as a weak, tempted, and rescued creature should. It imitates the great Master, and looks with indignation upon the offender, and yet is grieved for him.

III. In the last place, I would set forth the intrinsic worth and greatness of this disposition as a reason for cherishing it. This rank does the virtue of compassion hold in the character of our Saviour.

How superior is the man of forbearance and gentleness to every other man in the collisions of society! He is the real conqueror; the conqueror of himself: but that is not all; he conquers others. There is no dominion in the social world like this. It is a dominion which makes not slaves, but freemen; which levies no tribute, but of gratitude; whose only monuments are those of virtuous example.

No man may claim much merit merely for being indignant at the faults and sins of those around him. It is better than indifference, better than no feeling; but it is only the beginning and youth of virtue. The youthful, untutored, unsubdued mind, is only angry with sin; and thinks it does well to be angry. But when more reflection comes, and a deeper consciousness of personal deficiencies, and a more entire subjection to the meek and compassionate spirit of Jesus Christ is wrought out in the mind, a new character begins to develope itself. Harsh words, borne upon the breath of a hasty temper, do not ruffle the soul as they once did. Reproof is received with meekness, and in silence. The tongue is not ever ready, as if it were an instrument made to ward off reproach. The peace of the soul does not stand in the opinion of others. Faults are estimated with forbearance. Mature and fixed virtue is too high and strong to think of building itself up, like a doubtful reputation, upon surrounding deficiencies. Sins are more immediately and habitually connected with the sufferings they must occasion; and therefore they more surely awaken pity. The man of advancing piety and virtue, is growing in the conviction, indeed, that the only real, essential, immitigable evil is sin. He mourns over it in himself; he mourns over it in others. It is the root of bitterness in the field of life. It is the foe with which he is holding the long and often disheartening conflict. It is the cloud upon the face of nature. That cloud overspreads his neighbour with himself. And he pities from his inmost soul all who walk beneath it.

Patience with the erring and offending is one of the loftiest of all the forms of character. "Compassion for souls," though the phrase is often used in a cant and technical manner, ought to be a great and ennobling sentiment. Compassion, indeed, for souls—how should it transcend all other compassion! Look over the world and say, where are its sufferings? In the diseased body, in the broken limb, in the wounded and bruised organs of sense? In the desolate dwelling of poverty—in hunger, and cold, and nakedness? Yes, suffering is there; and Providence has put a tongue in every suffering member of the human frame to plead its cause. But enter into the soul—pass through these outworks, and enter the very seat of power, and what things are there—uttering no sound perhaps, breathing no complaint—but what things are there to move compassion? Wounded and bruised affections, blighted capacities, broken and defeated hopes, desolation, solitariness,

silence, sorrow, anguish, and sin, the cause and consummation of all the deepest miseries of an afflicted life. If the surgeon's knife should cut the very heart, it would hardly inflict a sharper pang than anger, envy, smiting shame, and avenging remorse. Yet happiness is near that heart; happiness, the breath of infinite goodness, the blessed voice of mercy, is all around it; and it is all madly shunned. Eternal happiness is offered to it, and it rejects the offer. It goes on, and on, through life, inwardly burthened, groaning in secret, bleeding, weltering in its passions; but it will not seek the true relief. Its wounds are without cause; its sufferings without recompense; its life without true comfort; and its end without hope. Compassion, indeed, for souls! who may not justly feel it for others' and for his own?

So Jesus looked upon the world—save that he had no compassion to feel for himself; and so much the more touching was his compassion for us. From the sublime height of his own immaculate purity he looked down upon a sinful, and degraded, and afflicted race. "Weep not for me," he said, "but weep for yourselves and your children." So Jesus looked upon the world, and pitied it. He taught us, that we might be wise: he was poor that we might be rich; he suffered, that we might be happy; he wept, that we might rejoice; he died—he died the accursed death of the cross, that we might live—live for ever.

GOD'S LOVE, THE CHIEF RESTRAINT FROM SIN AND RESOURCE IN SORROW.

1 John iv. 16: "God is love."

It was a saying of Plato, that "the soul is mere darkness till it is illuminated with the knowledge of God." What Plato said of the soul is true of everything. Everything is dark till the light of God's perfection shines upon it. That "God is love," is the great central truth that gives brightness to every other truth. Not only the moral system, but nature, and the science of nature, would be dark without that truth. I am persuaded it might be shown, that it is the great, essential principle, which lies at the foundation of all interesting knowledge. It may not be always distinctly observed by the philosopher; but how could he proceed in those investigations that are leading him through all the labyrinths of nature, if it were not for the conviction secretly working within him, that all is right, that all is well? How could he have the heart to pursue his way, as he is penetrating into the mysteries, whether of rolling worlds, or of vegetating atoms, if he felt that the system he was exploring was a system of boundless malevolence! He would stand aghast and powerless at that thought. It would spread a shadow darker than universal eclipse, over the splendour of heaven. It would endow every particle of earth with a principle of malignity, too awful for the hardiest philosophic scrutiny!

The Scriptures assign the same pre-eminence to the doctrine of divine goodness which it holds in nature and philosophy. It is never said, in Scripture, that God is greatness, or power, or knowledge; but, with a comprehensive and affecting emphasis, it is written, that God is love; not that he is lovely, not that he is good, not that he is benevolent, merely—that would be too abstract for the great, vital, life-giving truth—but it is written, I repeat, that God is love!

And it is not of this truth as an abstract truth, my friends, that I propose now to speak. I wish to consider chiefly its applications; and especially its applications to two great conditions of human life; to the conditions of temptation and sorrow. Affliction, we know, is sometimes addressed with worldly consolations, and sin is often assailed with denunciation and alarm; yet for both alike, and for all that makes up the mingled conflict, and sorrow, and hope of life, it seems to me that a deep and affectionate trust in the love of God is the only powerful, sustaining, and controlling principle.

Let me say again—an affectionate trust; the faith, in other words, that works by love. It is not a cold, speculative, theological faith, that can prepare us to meet the discipline of life. It is the confidence of

love only that can carry us through. Love only can understand love. This only can enable us to say, "we have known and believed the love that God hath to us." We profess to believe in God, to believe in the divine perfection. But I say, my brethren, that we do not properly know what we believe in, without love to it. Love only can understand love. Love only can give to faith in divine love its proper character; and especially that character of assurance and strength which will enable us to meet, unshaken and unfaltering, the temptations and trials of life.

The principle that is to meet exigencies like these; that is to hold the long conflict with sin and sorrow; that is to sustain triumphantly the burthen of this mortal experience; must be intelligent, active, penetrating, and powerful. For the problem of this life, my brethren, is not readily nor easily to be solved. I know that there is light upon it—welcome light. But it cannot be carried into the mazes of human experience; it cannot illuminate what is dark, nor clear up what is difficult, without much reflection—and reflection upon what, if not upon the character of the ordainer of this lot?—without much reflection, I repeat, and care, every way, to the direction and posture of our own minds. It was not intended that our faith should be a passive principle; that all should be plain and easy to it; that moral light should fall upon our path, as clear, obvious, and bright as sunshine. It pleases God to try the religion of his earthly children. He would have their trust in him to be a nobler act than mere vision could be. He would have their faith grow and strengthen by severe exercise. He would say to them at last, not only "well done, good!"—but, "well done, *faithful!*—enter ye into the joys of your Lord: enter into joys, made dear by sorrow, made bright by the darkness you have experienced, made noble and glorious by the trying of your faith, which is more precious than gold."

I said, that the problem of this life is not readily nor easily to be solved. I can conceive that this may be an unmeaning declaration to those who have not thought much of life, to those whose lot has been easy, and whose minds have partaken of the easiness of their lot. But there are those to whom the visitation of life, to whom the visitation of thought and feeling, has been a different thing. I can believe that there are some to whom I speak, whose minds have been haunted, from their very childhood, with that mournful and touching enquiry which we used to read in our early lessons, "Child of mortality! whence comest thou?" Man is, indeed, the child of a frail, changing, mortal lot; and yet the creature of an immortal hope. We are ready to ask such a being, at whom we must wonder as it seems to me, whence camest thou, and for what end? Didst thou come, frail being! from the source of strength, and wisdom, and goodness? Why then so feeble, so unwise, so unworthy? Why art thou here, and such as thou art—so strong in grief, and so weak in fortitude! so boundless in aspiration, so poor in possession! Why art thou here?—with this strangely mingled being; so glad and so sorrowful; so earthly and so heavenly; so in love with life, and so weary of it; so eagerly clinging to life, and yet borne away by a sighing breath of the evening air! Whence, and wherefore, frail man! art thou such an one? All else is well; but with *thee* all is not well. The world is fair around thee; the bright and blessed sun shineth on

thee; the green and flowing fields spread far, and cheer thine eye, and invite thy footstep; the groves are full of melody; ten thousand happy creatures range freely through all the paths of nature; but thou art not satisfied as they are—thou art not happy—thou art not provided for as they are; earth hath no coverts for thy sheltering; thou must toil, thou must build houses, and gather defences for thy frailty; and in the sweat of thy brow must thou eat thy bread. And when all is done, thou must die; and thou knowest it. Death, strange visitant, is ever approaching to meet thee; death, dark gate of mystery, is ever the termination of thy path!

But, my brethren, is this all? To live, to toil, to struggle, to suffer, to sorrow, to die—is this all? No, it is not all; but it is God's love, and the revelation of God's love in the promise of immortality only, that can assure us that there is more. And so necessary do these seem to me, to bear up the thinking, feeling, suffering, hoping, enquiring mind; so necessary is it that a voice of God should speak to the creatures of this earthly discipline,—necessary as that a parental voice should be ready and near to hush the cry of infancy,—that, instead of stumbling at marvels and miracles, at interpositions and teachings, I confess I have sometimes wondered that there were not more of them. I have wondered that the manifestations of God did not oftener appear in the blazing bush and the cloud-capt mountain. I have wondered that the curtain of mystery that hides the other world were not sometimes lifted up; that the cherubim of mercy and of hope were not sometimes throned on the clouds of the eventide; that the bright and silent stars did not sometimes break the deep stillness that reigns among them, with the scarcely fabled music of their spheres; that the rich flood of morning light, as it bathes the earth in love, did not utter voices from its throne of heavenly splendour, to proclaim the goodness of God. No; I wonder not at marvels and miracles. That scene on the mount of transfiguration—Moses and Elias talking with our Saviour—seems to me, so far from being strange and incredible, to meet a want of the mind; and I only wonder, if I may venture to say so, that it is not sometimes repeated.

Yet why should I say this? The love of God to us is sure; and it is a sufficient assurance. Trust in him is a sustaining principle; and it is sufficient strength. There *is* another state of being for us—perish all reason and all faith if it is not so!—there *is* another state of being for us; and though the eye hath not seen it, and the ear hath caught no sound from its wide realm, the great promise and hope are sufficient.

I say, the love of God is sure. He does love the moral beings whom he has made in his image; loves them, I doubt not, in their fears and doubtings, and struggles, and sorrows; loves them, I believe, even in their sins, nay, and has commended his love to them in this very character—has commended his love to them, in that, while they were yet sinners, Christ died for them.

Can you doubt whether man is the object of God's love? Look at the feeble insect tribes, sporting in the beams of life, happy in their hour, perishing but to give life to others. Is he not a kind Being who made even these? Is it not the breath of love in which even they live? Look at all the ranks and orders of irrational creatures that in-

habit the fields, the groves, the mountains, the living streams of ocean. Look at the free and fleet rangers of the forest. Go thou, and unfold the inward frame of such an one; trace every part of the wonderful mechanism; mark every sinew; follow the courses of its life-blood; see every skilful and exquisite adaptation for sustenance, for strength, for speed, for beauty. Is not this the workmanship of goodness? Could any but a kind and gracious Being have done this? "Ask now of the beasts," says Job, "and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee; or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee."

But turn, now, from all these, and look—yes, look at one human heart. How infinite the difference! The human heart—say what we will of it, let the cynic or the sceptic say what he will—but what a concentration of energies, what a gathering up of mighty thoughts, what a home of dear and gentle affections, what a deep fountain of tears and sorrows, is there! What strugglings are pent up within its narrow enclosure; what mighty powers sleep within its folding bosom; what images of the grand, the godlike, the indefinite, the eternal, lie in its unfathomable depths! Doth not the Maker of that heart regard it with kindness? Doth he not pity a being that can sorrow? Doth he not love a being whom he hath made capable of love—of all its yearning, of all its tenderness? Doth he not care for a being whom he hath made capable of improving for ever?

Assuredly, if nature speaks truth, if revelation utters wisdom, he does love his rational offspring. How strong is the language of that revelation! "Can a mother forget her child? Yea, she may forget, yet will not I forget thee."

Let this, then, be settled in every heart as one of the great convictions of life; let it be taken to the soul as a part of the armour of God, to defend it against this world's temptations and calamities. We may not all, or we may not always, feel the need of it; but we do all need it, and we need it always,—always, I say; for we are always exposed to sin, and we are always exposed to sorrow. Let us look at these conditions of life for a few moments, to see how the apprehension of God's love to us is fitted to restrain us in the one case, and to comfort us in the other.

Nothing would be so effectual to restrain us from sin, if we felt it, as the love of God to us; nothing would be so effectual to recall us from our wanderings. It is a lofty conviction of which I speak, my brethren, and not the ordinary and dull acknowledgment, the mere theological inference, that God is good. Let any one feel that God is as truly good to him, as truly loves him, is as really interested for his welfare, as his father, or his most devoted friend; that even when he is rebellious and disobedient, the good and blessed God pities him, and pleads with him to return, pleads with him even through the sufferings of Christ, his Son. Let him feel that the kind and gracious Creator has fashioned that wonderful, but abused mind within him; called forth those sweet, but neglected affections; provided dear objects for them; given him home, given him friends, showered mercies upon him; let him thus feel how ungenerous and ungrateful is the course of sin and vice; and surely all this, if anything can, will touch him with conviction, and move him to repentance. Let it be so, that all other motives have

failed; but who of us, if he rightly saw it, could lift his hand against that which is all love? Who of us, if he felt that love to him, and to all around him—who could be selfish, contemptuous, haughty, or hard-hearted towards his brother? Who of us, if he saw all the gifts of life to be the sacred gifts of that love, could abuse them to purposes of selfish ambition, or vicious indulgence? The spirit of the sinner,—the spirit of sin, I mean, so far as it goes, is a reckless spirit. The offender cares not, very much in proportion as he feels that nobody cares for him. He hardens himself against everything the more, because he supposes that everything is hardened against him. And when he goes to the worst excesses in vice, the manifest scorn of his fellow-creatures is the last influence that steels his heart against every better feeling. And yet even then there is sometimes left one thought that moves him to tears: it is the thought of his mother, dwelling alone, perhaps, in his far distant and forsaken home; it is the thought of his mother, who sighs in secret places for him; who still mingles his outcast name with every evening prayer, saying, "Oh! restore my poor child!" But let him remember, that even if his mother should forget, God does not forget him, does not forsake him, does not withdraw all his mercies from him. His friends may withdraw themselves; he may have no earthly bosom to lean upon! but the elements embosom him around; the air breathes upon him a breath of kindness; the sun shines beneficently upon him; the page of mercy is spread for him, and it is written over with invitations and promises; it says, in accents that might break a heart of stone, "Turn thou! turn, thou forsaken one! for why wilt thou die?"

So effectual, my brethren, did we rightly consider it, might be the love of God to restrain us from sin, and recall us to virtue and piety.

Equally might it avail, and equally indispensable is it, to comfort us in affliction. I have already spoken of the afflictions of life, and need not repeat what I then said; suffice it, that every heart knows what it has to suffer and to struggle with: but one thing I am sure of, that that heart can find no repose but in a firm trust in the infinite love of God. I speak now for a reasonable mind, for one that is not willing to suffer blindly as a brute suffers, for one that does not find it enough to conclude that it must suffer and cannot help it. I speak for one whom sorrow has aroused to consider the great questions, wherefore he is made, and why he is made to suffer; and I am sure that such an one must behold goodness enthroned and reigning over all the events of time and the destinies of eternity; or for his mind there is no friend nor helper in the universe. Ah! there are questions which nothing can answer but God's love; which nothing can meet but God's promise; which nothing can calm but a perfect trust in his goodness. Speak to the void darkness of affliction, "the first dark day of nothingness" after trouble has come; speak to life, through all its stages and fortunes, from oftentimes suffering infancy to trembling age; speak to this crowded world of events, accidents, and vicissitudes; ay, or speak thou to the inward world of the heart, with all its strifes, its sinkings, its misgivings, its remembrances, its strange visitings of long gone thoughts,

"Touching the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound,"

and none of these can answer us; we call as vainly upon them as the

priests of Baal upon their god. There is shadow and mystery upon all the creation, till we see God in it; there is trouble and fear till we see God's love in it.

But give me that assurance, and though there are many things which I know not, many things which I cannot explain nor understand, yet I can consent *not* to know them. Enough to know that God is good, and what he does is right. This known, and the works of creation, the changes of life, the destinies of eternity, are all spread before us as the dispensations and counsels of infinite love. This known, and then we know that the love of God is working to issues like itself, beyond all thought and imagination good and glorious; and that the only reason why we understand it not is, that it is too glorious for us to understand. This known, and what then do we say? God's love taketh care for all—nothing is neglected: God's love watcheth over all, provideth for all, maketh wise adaptations for all; for age, for infancy, for maturity, for childhood, in every scene of this or another life; for want, for weakness, for joy, and for sorrow, and even for sin; so that even the wrath of man shall praise the goodness of God. All is good; all is well; all is right; and shall be for ever. This, oh! this is an inheritance, and a refuge, and a rest for the mind, from which the convulsions of worlds cannot shake it.

In what an aspect does this conviction present the scenes of eternity! We are placed here in a state of imperfection and trial, and much that seems like mystery and mischance. But what shall the future be, if the light of God's goodness is to shine through its ages? I answer, it shall be all bright disclosure, full consummation, blessed recompense. We shall doubtless *see* what we can now only believe. The cloud will be lifted up, and will unveil—eternity! And what an eternity! All brightness; all beatitude; one unclouded vision; one immeasurable progress! The gate of mystery shall be past, and the full light shall shine for ever. Blessed change! That which caused us trial shall yield us triumph. That which was the deeper darkness shall be but the brighter light. That which made the heart ache shall fill it with gladness. Tears shall be wiped away, and beamings of joy shall come in their place. He who tried the soul that he loved, shall more abundantly comfort the soul that he approves. That God, who has walked in the mysterious way, with clouds and darkness around about him, will then appear as the great Revealer, and he will reveal what the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart conceived.

Let me insist, in close, as I did in the beginning, upon the necessity of this affectionate trust in God. We cannot live as reasonable beings upon any conviction less lofty, less divine, less heartfelt than this. This is not a matter of will; it is a matter of necessity. Our minds cannot have a full, and, at the same time, safe development; reflection and feeling cannot safely grow in us, unless they are guided, relieved, and sustained by the contemplations of piety. The fresh and unworn sensibility of youth may hold on for awhile, and may keep its fountain clear and bright; but, by and bye, changes will come on; affliction will lay its chastening hand upon us; disappointment will settle, like a chilling damp, upon the spirits; the mind will be discouraged, if there is nothing but earthly hope to cheer it on; the reasonings of misanthropy and the misgivings of scepticism will steal into it, and blight its gene-

rous affections; morbid sensitiveness will take the place of healthful feeling; all this will naturally come on with the growing experience of life, if the love of God be not our support and safeguard. Every mind may not be conscious of this tendency, but every mind that thinks much and feels deeply will be conscious of it, and will feel it bitterly. Your body may live on; but your soul, in its full development, in its deep wants, in its "strong hour" of trial and of reflection, must pine, and perish, and die, without this holy trust. Let it not so perish. Creature of God's love; believe in that love which gave thee being. Believe in that love which every moment redeems thee from death, and offers to redeem thee from the death eternal. Believe in God's love and be wise, be patient, be comforted, be cheerful and happy—be happy in time; be happy in eternity!

THE VOICES OF THE DEAD.

HEBREWS xi. 4: "And by it, he being dead, yet speaketh."

THIS is a record of virtue that existed six thousand years ago; but which yet liveth in its memory, and speaketh in its example. "Abel," it is written, "offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it, he being dead, yet speaketh." How enduring is the memorial of goodness! It is but a sentence, which is read in a moment—it is but a leaf from the school of time; and yet it is borne on the breath of ages—it takes the attributes of universality and eternity—it becomes a heritage from family to family, among all the dwellings of the world.

But it is not Abel alone, the accepted worshipper and martyred brother that thus speaks to us. The world is filled with the voices of the dead. They speak not from the public records of the great world only, but from the private history of our own experience. They speak to us in a thousand remembrances, in a thousand instances, events, associations. They speak to us not only from their silent graves, but from the throng of life. Though they are invisible, yet life is filled with their presence. They are with us by the silent fireside, and in the secluded chamber; they are with us in the paths of society, and in the crowded assembly of men. They speak to us from the lonely way-side; and they speak to us from the venerable walls that echo to the steps of a multitude, and to the voice of prayer. Go where we will, the dead are with us. We live, we converse with those who once lived and conversed with us. Their well-remembered tone mingles with the whispering breezes, with the sound of the falling leaf, with the jubilee shout of the spring-time. The earth is filled with their shadowy train.

But there are more substantial expressions of the presence of the dead with the living. The earth is filled with the labours, the works of the dead. Almost all the literature in the world, the discoveries of science, the glories of art, the ever-during temples, the dwelling-places of generations, the comforts and improvements of life, the languages, the maxims, the opinions of the living, the very frame-work of society, the institutions of nations, the fabrics of empire—all are the works of the dead; by these, they who are dead yet speak. Life—busy, eager, craving, importunate, absorbing life—yet what is its sphere, compared with the empire of death! What, in other words, is the sphere of visible, compared with the mighty empire of invisible life! A moment in time; a speck in immensity; a shadow amidst enduring and unchangeable realities; a breath of existence amidst the ages and regions of undying life! They live—they live indeed, whom we call dead.

They live in our thoughts; they live in our blessings; they live in our life: "death hath no power over them."

Let us, then, meditate upon those—the mighty company of our departed brethren—who occupy such a space in the universe of being. Let us meditate upon their relation, their message, their ministry, to us. Let us look upon ourselves in this relation, and see what we owe to the dead. Let us look upon the earth, and see if death hath not left behind its desolating career, some softer traces, some holier imprint, than of destruction.

I. What memories, then, have the dead left among us, to stimulate us to virtue, to win us to goodness!

The approach to death often prepares the way for this impression. The effect of a last sickness to develop and perfect the virtues of our friends, is often so striking and beautiful, as to seem more than a compensation for all the sufferings of disease. It is the practice of the Catholic Church to bestow upon its eminent saints a title to the perpetual homage of the faithful, in the act of canonization. But what is a formal decree, compared with the effect of a last sickness, to canonize the virtue that we love, for eternal remembrance and admiration? How often does that touching decay, that gradual unclothing of the mortal body, seem to be a putting on of the garments of immortal beauty and life! That pale cheek; that placid brow; that sweet serenity spread over the whole countenance; that spiritual, almost supernatural brightness of the eye, as if light from another world already shone through it; that noble and touching disinterestedness of the parting spirit, which utters no complaint, which breathes no sigh, which speaks no word of fear nor apprehension to wound its friend, which is calm, and cheerful, and natural, and self-sustained, amidst daily declining strength and the sure approach to death; and then, at length, when concealment is no longer possible, that last, firm, triumphant, consoling discourse, and that last look of all mortal tenderness, and immortal trust;—what hallowed memories are these to soothe, to purify, to enrapture, surviving love!

Death, too, sets a seal upon the excellence that sickness unfolds and consecrates. There is no living virtue, concerning which—such is our frailty—we must not fear that it may fall, or at least, that it may somewhat fail from its steadfastness. It is a painful, it is a just fear, in the bosoms of the best and purest beings on earth, that some dreadful lapse may come over them, or over those whom they hold in the highest reverence. But death, fearful, mighty as its power, is yet a power that is subject to virtue. It gives victory to virtue. It brings relief to the heart, from its profoundest fear. It enables us to say, "Now all is safe! The battle is fought, the victory is won. The course is finished, the race is run, the faith is kept; henceforth it is no more doubt nor danger, no more temptation nor strife; henceforth is the reward of the just, the crown which the Lord, the righteous judge will give!" Yes, death—dark power of earth though it seem—does yet ensphere virtue, as it were, in heaven. It sets it up on high, for eternal admiration. It fixes its place never more to be changed—as a star to shine onward and onward, through the depths of the everlasting ages!

In life, there are many things which interfere with a just estimate

of the virtues of others. There are, in some cases, jealousies and misconstructions, and there are false appearances; there are veils upon the heart that hide its most secret workings and its sweetest affections from us; there are earthly clouds that come between us and the excellence that we love. So that it is not, perhaps, till a friend is taken from us that we entirely feel his value, and appreciate his worth. The vision is loveliest at its vanishing away; and we perceive not, perhaps, till we see the parting wing, that an angel has been with us.

Yet, if we are not, from any cause, or in any degree, blind to the excellence we possess, if we do feel all the value of the treasure which our affections hold dear; yet, I say, how does that earthly excellence take not only a permanent but a saintly character, as it passes beyond the bounds of mortal frailty and imperfection: how does death enshrine it, for a homage more reverential and holy than is ever given to living worth! So that the virtues of the dead gain, perhaps, in the power of sanctity, what they lose in the power of visible presence; and thus—it may not be too much to say—thus the virtues of the dead benefit us sometimes as much as the examples of living goodness.

How beautiful is the ministration by which those who are dead thus speak to us—thus help us, comfort us, guide, gladden, bless us! How grateful must it be to their thoughts of us, to know that we thus remember them, not with mere admiration, but in a manner that ministers to all our virtues! What a glorious vision of the future is it, to the good and pure who are yet living on earth, that the virtues which they are cherishing and manifesting, the good character which they are building up here, the charm of their benevolence and piety, shall live when they have laid down the burden and toil of life—shall be an inspiring breath to the fainting hearts that are broken from them—a wafted odour of sanctity to hundreds and thousands that shall come after them. Is it not so? Are there not those, the simplest story, the frailest record of whose goodness is still and ever doing good! But frail records, we know full well—frail records they are not which are now in our hearts. And can we have known those whom it is a joy as well as a sorrow to think of, and not to be better for it? Are there those—once our friends, now bright angels in some blessed sphere—and do we not sometimes say, "Perhaps that pure eye of affection is on me now; and I will do nothing to wound it?" No, surely it cannot be that the dead will speak to us in vain. Their memories are all around us; their footsteps are in our paths; the memorials of them meet our eye at every turn; their presence is in our dwellings; their voices are in our ears; they speak to us—in the sad reverie of contemplation, in the sharp pang of feeling, in the cold shadow of memory, in the bright light of hope—and it cannot be that they will speak in vain.

II. Nay, the very world we live in,—is it not consecrated to us by the memory of the dead? Are not the very scenes of life made more interesting to us, by being connected with thoughts that run backward far beyond the range of present life? This is another view of the advantage and effect with which those who are "dead, yet speak" to us.

If we were beings to whom present, immediate, instant enjoyment were everything; if we were animals, in other words, with all our thoughts prone to the earth on which we tread, the case would be different—the conclusion would be different. But we are beings of a

deeper nature, of wider relations, of higher aspirations, of a loftier destiny. And being such, I cannot hesitate to say for myself, that I would not have everything which I behold on earth the work of the present living generation. The world would be, comparatively, an ordinary, indifferent place, if it contained nothing but the workmanship, the handicraft, the devices of living men. No; I would see dwellings which speak to me of other things than earthly convenience, or fleeting pleasure; which speak to me the holy recollections of lives which were passed in them, and have passed away from them. I would see temples in which successive generations of men have prayed. I would see ruins, on whose mighty walls is inscribed the touching story of joy, and sorrow, love, heroism, patience, which lived there—there breathed its first hope, its last sigh—ages ago. I would behold scenes which offer more than fair landscape and living stream to my eye; which tell me of inspired genius, glorious fortitude, martyred faith, that studied there—suffered there—died there. I would behold the earth, in fine, when it is spread before me, as more than soil and scenery, rich and fair though they be; I would behold the earth as written over with histories—as a sublime page, on which are recorded the lives of men and empires.

The world, even of nature, is not one laughing, gay scene. It is not so in fact; it appears not so in the light of our sober, solemn, Christian teachings. The dark cloud sometimes overshadows it; the storm sweeps through its pleasant valleys; the thunder smites its everlasting hills; and the holy record hath said, "thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." It has been said that all the tones in nature are—to use the musical phrase—on the minor key. That is to say, they are plaintive tones. And although the fact is probably somewhat exaggerated when stated so strongly and unqualifiedly, yet to a certain extent it is true. It is true that that tone always mingles with the music of nature. In the winds that stir the mountain pine, as well as in the wailing storm; in the soft-falling shower, and in the rustling of the autumn leaves; in the roar of ocean, as it breaks upon the lonely sea-beach; in the thundering cataract, that lifts up its eternal anthem amidst the voices of nature; and so, likewise, in those inarticulate interpretations of nature, the bleating of flocks, the lowing of herds, and even in the song of birds, there is usually something plaintive—something that touches the sad and brooding spirit of thought. And the contemplation of nature in all its forms, as well of beauty as of sublimity, is apt to be tinged with melancholy. And all the higher musings, the nobler aspirations of the mind, possess something of this character. I doubt if there were ever a manifestation of genius in the world that did not bear something of this trait.

It can scarcely be the part of wisdom, then, to refuse to sympathize with this spirit of nature and humanity. And it can be no argument against a contemplation of the world, as having its abodes sanctified by the memory of the departed, as having its brightness softly veiled over by the shadow of death—it can be no argument against such contemplation that it is somewhat sober and sad. I feel, then, that the dead have conferred a blessing upon me, in helping me to think of the world thus rightly; in thus giving a hue of sadness to the scenes of this world, while, at the same time, they have clothed it with every glorious and powerful charm of association. This mingled spirit of energy and hu-

mility, of triumph and tenderness, of glorying and sorrowing, is the very spirit of Christianity. It was the spirit of Jesus—the conqueror and the sufferer. Death was before him; and yet his thoughts were of triumph. Victory was in his view; and yet, what a victory! No laurel crown was upon his head; no flush of pride was upon his brow—but meekness was enthroned there; no exultation flashed from his eye—but tears flowed from it:—"Jesus wept."

Come, then, to us, that spirit at once of courage and meekness; of fortitude and gentleness; of a life hopeful and happy, but thoughtful of death; of a world bright and beautiful, but passing away! So let us live and act, and think and feel; and let us thank the good Providence, the good ordination of heaven, that has made the dead our teachers.

III. But they teach us more. They not only leave their own enshrined and canonized virtues for us to love and imitate; they not only gather about us the glorious and touching associations of the past, to hallow and dignify this world to us, and to throw the soft veil of memory over all its scenes; but they open a future world to our vision, and invite us to its blessed abodes.

They open that world to us, by giving, in their own deaths, a strong proof of its existence.

The future, indeed, to mere earthly views, is often "a land of darkness as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death without any order, and where the light is as darkness." Truly, death is "without any order." There is in it such a total disregard to circumstances, as shows that it cannot be an ultimate event. That must be connected with something else—that cannot be final, which, considered as final, puts all the calculations of wisdom so utterly at defiance. The tribes of animals, the classes and species of the vegetable creation, come to their perfection, and then die. But is there any such order for human beings? Do the generations of mankind go down to the grave in ranks and processions? Are the human, like the vegetable races, suffered to stand till they have made provision for their successors, before they depart? No; without order, without discrimination, without provision for the future, or remedy for the past, the children of men depart. They die—the old, the young, the most useless and those most needed, the worst and the best, alike die; and if there be no scenes beyond this life, if there be no circumstances nor allotments to explain the mystery, then all around us is, as it was to the doubting spirit of Job, "a land of darkness as darkness itself." The blow falls, like the thunderbolt beneath the dark cloud; but it has not even the intention, the explanation, that belongs to that dread minister. The stroke of death must be more reckless than even the lightning's flash: yes, that solemn visitation that cometh with so many dread signs—the body's dissolution, the spirit's extremity, the winding up of the great scene of life—has not even the meaning that belongs to the blindest agents in nature, if there be no reaction, no revelation hereafter! Can this be? Doth God take care for things animate and inanimate, and will he not care for us?

Let us look at it for a moment. I have seen one die—the delight of his friends, the pride of his kindred, the hope of his country: but he died! How beautiful was that offering upon the altar of death! The

fire of genius kindled in his eye ; the generous affections of youth mantled in his cheek ; his foot was upon the threshold of life ; his studies, his preparations for honoured and useful life, were completed ; his breast was filled with a thousand glowing, and noble, and never yet expressed aspirations: but he died! He died! while another, of a nature dull, coarse, and unrefined ; of habits low, base, and brutish ; of a promise that had nothing in it but shame and misery—such an one, I say, was suffered to encumber the earth. Could this be, if there were no other sphere for the gifted, the aspiring, and the approved, to act in? Can we believe that the energy just trained for action, the embryo thought just bursting into expression, the deep and earnest passion of a noble nature just swelling into the expansion of every beautiful virtue, should never speak, should never unfold itself? Can we believe that all this should die ; while meanness, corruption, sensuality, and every deformed and dishonoured power should live? No ; ye goodly and glorious ones! ye godlike in youthful virtue!—ye die not in vain : ye teach, ye assure us, that ye are gone to some world of nobler life and action.

I have seen one die: she was beautiful; and beautiful were the ministries of life that were given her to fulfil. Angelic loveliness enrobed her ; and a grace, as if it were caught from heaven, breathed in every tone, hallowed every affection, shone in every action—invested, as a halo, her whole existence, and made it a light and blessing, a charm and a vision of gladness to all around her: but she died! Friendship, and love, and parental fondness, and infant weakness, stretched out their hand to save her ; but they could not save her ; and she died! What! did all that loveliness die? Is there no land of the blessed and the lovely ones for such to live in? Forbid it reason!—religion!—bereaved affection, and undying love! forbid the thought! It cannot be that such die in God's counsel who live, even in frail human memory, for ever!

I have seen one die—in the maturity of every power ; in the earthly perfection of every faculty ; when many temptations had been overcome, and many hard lessons had been learned ; when many experiments had made virtue easy, and had given a facility to action, and a success to endeavour ; when wisdom had been learnt from many mistakes, and a skill had been laboriously acquired in the use of many powers ; and the being I looked upon had just compassed that most useful, most practical of all knowledge, how to live, and to act well and wisely : yet I have seen such an one die! Was all this treasure gained only to be lost? Were all these faculties trained only to be thrown into utter disuse? Was this instrument—the intelligent soul, the noblest in the universe—was it so laboriously fashioned, and by the most varied and expensive apparatus, that, on the very moment of being finished, it should be cast away for ever? No, the dead, as we call them, do not *so* die. They carry our thoughts to another and a nobler existence. They teach us, and especially by all the strange and seemingly untoward circumstances of their departure from this life, that they and we shall live for ever. They open the future world, then, to our faith.

They open it also, and in fine, to our affections. No person of reflection and piety can have lived long without beginning to find, in

regard to the earthly objects that most interest him—his friends—that the balance is gradually inclining in favour of another world. How many, after the middle period of life, and especially in declining years, must feel, if the experience of life has had any just effect upon them—that the objects of their strongest attachment are not here. One by one the ties of earthly affections are cut asunder; one by one friends, companions, children, parents, are taken from us; for a time, perhaps, we are "in a state betwixt two," as was the apostle, not deciding altogether whether it is better to depart; but shall we not, at length, say with the disciples, when some dearer friend is taken, "Let us go and die with him"?

The dead have not ceased their communication with us, though the visible chain is broken. If they are still the same, they must still think of us. As two friends on earth may know that they love each other, without any expression, without even the sight of each other; as they may know, though dwelling in different and distant countries, without any visible chain of communication, that their thoughts meet and mingle together, so may it be with two friends, of whom the one is on earth, and the other is in heaven. Especially where there is such an union of pure minds, that it is scarcely possible to conceive of separation; that union seems to be a part of their very being; we may believe that their friendship, their mutual sympathy, is beyond the power of the grave to break up. "But ah!" we say, "if there were only some manifestation; if there were only a glimpse of that blessed land; if there were, indeed, some messenger-bird, such as is supposed in some countries to come from the spirit-land, how eagerly should we question!" In the words of the poet we should say,—

> "But tell us, thou bird of the solemn strain,
> Can those who have loved forget?
> We call—but *they* answer not again—
> *Do* they love—do they love us yet?
> We call them far through the silent night,
> And they speak not from cave or hill;
> We know, we know, that their land is bright,
> But say, do they love there still?"

The poetic doubt we may answer with plain reasoning, and plainer Scripture. We may say, in the language of reason, if they live there, they love there. We may answer in the language of Jesus Christ, "He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." And again: "Have ye not read," saith our Saviour, "that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Then is it true that they live there; and they yet speak to us. From that bright sphere, from that calm region, from the bowers of life immortal, they speak to us. They say to us, "Sigh not in despair over the broken and defeated expectations of earth. Sorrow not as those who have no hope. Bear calmly and cheerfully thy lot. Brighten the chain of love—of sympathy—of communion with all pure minds on earth and in heaven. Think, oh! think of the mighty and glorious company that fill the immortal regions! Light, life, beauty, beatitude, are here. Come, children of earth! come to the bright and blessed land!" I see no lovely features revealing themselves through

the dim and shadowy veils of heaven. I see no angel forms enrobed with the bright clouds of eventide. But "I hear a voice saying, write, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest—for they rest from their labours, and their works—works of piety and love recorded in our hearts, and kept in eternal remembrance—their works do follow them." Our hearts—their workmanship—do follow them. We will go and die with them. We will go and live with them for ever!

Can I leave these meditations, my brethren, without paying homage to that religion which has brought life and immortality to light—without calling to mind that simple and touching acknowledgment of the good apostle, "I thank God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Ah! how desolate must be the affections of a people that spurn this truth and trust! I have wandered among the tombs of such a people; I have wandered through that far-famed cemetery that overlooks, from its mournful brow, the gay and crowded metropolis of France; but among the many inscriptions upon those tombs, I read scarcely one—I read, —to state so striking a fact with numerical exactness—I read not more than four or five inscriptions in the whole Pere La Chaise, which made any consoling reference to a future life. I read, on those cold marble tombs, the lamentations of bereavement, in every affecting variety of phrase. On the tomb of a youth it was written, that "its broken-hearted parents, who spent their days in tears, and their nights in anguish, had laid down here their treasure and their hope." On the proud mausoleum, where friendship, companionship, love, had deposited their holy relics, it was constantly written, "Her husband inconsolable," "His disconsolate wife," "A brother left alone and unhappy," has raised this monument; but seldom—so seldom, that scarcely ever did the mournful record close with a word of hope—scarcely at all was to be read, amidst the marble silence of that world of the dead, that there is a life beyond, and that surviving friends hope for a blessed meeting again, where death comes no more.

Oh, death!—dark hour to hopeless unbelief! hour to which, in that creed of despair, no hour shall succeed! being's last hour! to whose appalling darkness even the shadows of an avenging retribution were brightness and relief—death! what art thou to the Christian's assurance? Great hour of answers to life's prayer—great hour that shall break asunder the bond of life's ministry—hour of release from life's burden—hour of reunion with the loved and lost—what mighty hopes hasten to their fulfilment in thee! What longings, what aspirations, breathed in the still night, beneath the silent stars—what dread emotions of curiosity—what deep meditations of joy—what hallowed imaginings of never-experienced purity and bliss—what possibilities shadowing forth unspeakable realities to the soul, all verge to their consummation in thee! Oh, death! the Christian's death! what art thou, but the gate of life, the portal of heaven, the threshold of eternity!

"Thanks be to God"—let us say it, Christians! in the comforting words of holy Scripture—"thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ! What hope can be so precious, as the hope in him? What emblems can speak to be-

reaved affection, or to dying frailty, like those emblems at once of suffering and triumph, which proclaim a crucified and risen Lord; which proclaim that Jesus the Forerunner has passed through death to immortal life? Well, that the great truth should be signalized and sealed upon our hearts in holy rites! Well, that amidst mortal changes, and hasting to the tomb, we should, from time to time, set up an altar, and say, "by this heaven-ordained token do we know that we shall live for ever!" God grant the fulfilment of this great hope—what matter all things beside?—God grant the fulfilment of this great hope, through Jesus Christ!

MORAL VIEWS

ON

COMMERCE, SOCIETY, AND POLITICS.

PREFACE.

THE character of some of the following Discourses will, doubtless, be thought unusual for the pulpit. The subjects themselves, indeed, are out of the ordinary course of preaching. I might say in their defence, that such topics have been sometimes admitted into occasional sermons; and Commercial Morality, in particular, has been made the subject of, at least, one entire volume of religious discourses, which has not offended the popular taste. But this defence, I must confess, does not satisfy me. In justice to my own convictions, I must be allowed to place the following discussions on a broader ground than that of exception. If I deserve blame, I cannot fairly escape on such a plea; for I am persuaded, not only that such discussions are entirely proper for the pulpit, but that it is the bounden duty of the pulpit to entertain them.

If, indeed, I have violated the proper decorum of religious discourse, such an error is capable of no defence. But I must be allowed to say, that when I had determined that it was my duty as a preacher to discuss certain subjects, I could not allow any formality or fastidiousness of the pulpit to prevent me from doing so, with as much thoroughness and detail as were compatible with the gravity of the place. Thus, with regard to the first discourse—on the Moral Law of Contracts—knowing, as I did know, that the consciences of men around me were deeply involved in the questions that arose, I could not hesitate about going into the necessary specifications, however unusual in preaching;—the serious business of such a discourse would not allow me to stand on pulpit ceremony, as to terms, and phrases, and instances. I could not well be understood without them; and as the object of speaking is to be understood, I knew of no sanctity of time or place that was to contravene the laws of that very instrument—speech—which I was using.

I am not ignorant, at the same time, in what manner anything unusual in the subjects or style of religious discourses is likely to be received. I know that there will be some readers, as there have been hearers of these discourses, to say, that a part of them would be more suitable for the Lyceum and lecture-room. Nay, I will confess, that in delivering them, I have had certain feelings of reluctance to contend with, in my own mind; so powerful are old prepossessions against new or singular views of duty. Since I understand the feeling of objection, therefore, will the kind reader, who may entertain the same feeling, permit me to reason the matter a little with him and with myself, in the remainder of this preface?

Let me ask, in the first place, if our ideas of propriety in this case are not very much matters of convention and usage? If we had always been accustomed to hear discussions in our churches, on such subjects as the Morals of Traffic, of Politics, and of our social well-being as a nation; if the terms and phrases appropriate to such subjects had found a place in the pulpit, should we ever have doubted their propriety? It is observable, indeed, that certain topics have forced their way into the pulpit, within the last quarter of a century, which, it is probable, sounded as questionably and strangely in ears accustomed only to the old scholastic preaching as any grave moral topics can now. I allude to discussions on War and Peace, on Temperance, Abolition, and the various religious enterprises of the day.

The question then is—what is the proper range of the pulpit? What is the

appropriate business of preaching? The answer is plain—to address the public mind on its moral and religious duties and dangers. But what are its duties and dangers, and where are they to be found? Are they not to be found wherever men are acting their part in life? Are human responsibility and exposure limited to any one sphere of action—to the church, or to the domestic circle—or to the range of the gross and sensual passions? Are not men daily making shipwreck of their consciences in trade and politics? And wheresoever conscience goes to work out its perilous problem, shall not the preacher follow it? It is not very material whether a man's integrity forsakes him at the polls in an election, or at the board of merchandise, or at the house of rioting, or the gates whose way leadeth to destruction. Outwardly it may be different, but inwardly it is the same. In either case, the fall of the victim is the most deplorable of all things on earth; and most fit, therefore, for the consideration of the pulpit. I must confess, I cannot understand by what process of enlightened reasoning and conscience, the preacher can come to the conclusion, that there are wide regions of moral action and peril around him, into which he may not enter, because such unusual words as Commerce, Society, Politics, are written over the threshold.

Nay, more; is not the greatest possible disservice done to the highest interests of mankind, by this limitation as to subjects under which the pulpit has laid itself? The confined and technical character which belongs to the common administration of religion, does more than anything else, in my apprehension, to disarm it of its power. I am not insensible, when I say this, to the greatness of those obstacles in the human heart and in human life with which it has to contend. I am not now measuring the strength of those obstacles, but simply considering the force that is brought to bear upon them: that force is moral, spiritual force; and the leading form of it, in the public estimation, is preaching. The pulpit is the authorized expositor to men of their duties. Those duties, it will not be denied, press upon every action and instant of human life. But what now is the consideration which the pulpit generally gives to this wide and busy field of duty? Are not whole spheres of human action left out of the account? With the exception of some occasional and wholesale denunciations, are not business, politics, amusements, and fashionable society, passed by entirely? Are not men *left* to say, when engaged in those scenes, "religion has nothing to do with us here"? Do they not, naturally enough, feel that these engagements are, in a manner, set apart from all sense of duty? Is it strange, then, that the public conscience is lax in these matters? It seems to me, I must confess, rather a hard measure that the pulpit deals out to these departments of life. It never recognises them as spheres of duty; it does nothing for the correction or culture of men's minds in them; and yet, every now and then, it comes down upon their aberrations with cold, bitter, and unsparing censure.

Let me not be supposed to forget, that the pulpit has to deal with topics and questions of duty, that go down into the depths of the human heart—with faith, and repentance, and love, and self-denial, and disinterestedness—and that its principal business is thus to make the fountain pure. But religion has an outward form, as well as an inward spirit; that form is the whole lawful action of life; and to cut off half of that action from all public and positive recognition —what is it but to consign it over to irreligion, to unprincipled licence, and worldly vanity?

There is time enough in the pulpit for all things; nay, it *wants* variety. It is made dull by the restriction and reiteration of its topics. It would gain strength by a freer and fuller grasp of its proper objects. What it can do, I believe, yet remains to be seen. We complain of the corruptions of fashion and amusement, of business and politics. The calm, considerate, concentrated, universal attention of the pulpit to these things, would, in one year, I believe, produce a decided and manifest effect.

But the great evil, I am sensible, lies deeper—too deep for any sufficient consideration, within the narrow limits of a preface. The pulpit not only fails in this matter, but it fails *on principle*, and on a principle almost universally adopted. The evil is, that sermons, pulpits, priests—all the active agents that are labouring in the service of religion—are, by the public judgment, as well as by their own choice, severed from the great mass of human actions and interests.

ON THE MORAL LAW OF CONTRACTS.

1 THESSALONIANS iv. 6: "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter."

I PROPOSE to invite your attention in a series of three or four Sabbath evening discourses, to the moral laws of trade, the moral end of business, and to the moral principles which are to govern the accumulation of property. The first of these subjects is proposed for your consideration this evening; and it is one, as I conceive, of the highest interest and importance.

This country presents a spectacle of active, absorbing, and prosperous business, which strikes the eye of every stranger as its leading characteristic. We are said to be, and we *are* a people, beyond all others, devoted to business and accumulation. This, though it is often brought against us as a reproach, is really an inevitable result of our political condition. I trust that it is but the first development, and that many better ones are to follow. It does, however, spring from our institutions; and I hold, moreover, that it is honourable to them. If half of us were slaves, that half could have nothing to do with traffic. If half of us were in the condition of the peasantry of Europe, the business transactions of that half would be restricted within a narrow sphere, and would labour under a heavy pressure. But where liberty is given to each one to act freely for himself, and by all lawful means to better his condition, the consequence is inevitably what we see — an universal and unprecedented activity among all the classes of society, in all the departments of human industry. The moral principles, then, applicable to the transaction of business, have strong claims upon our attention; and seem to me very proper subjects of discussion in our pulpits.

There are moral questions, too, as we very well know, which actually do interest all reflecting and conscientious men who are engaged in trade. They are very frequently discussed in conversation; and very different grounds are taken by the disputants. Some say that one principle is altogether right, and others that another and totally different one is the only right principle. In such circumstances, it seems to me not only proper but requisite, for those whose office it is to speak to men of their duties, that they should take up the discussion of these as they would any other moral questions. I am obliged to confess that we are liable, scholastic and retired men as we are, to give some ground to men of business for anticipating that our reasonings and conclusions will not be very practical or satisfactory. I can only say, for myself, that I have, for some time, given patient and careful attention to the moral principles of trade; that I have often conversed with men of business, that I might understand the practical bearings and

difficulties of the subject; that I have also read some of the books in which the morality of contracts is discussed; and, although a clergyman, I shall venture, with some confidence, as well as modesty, to offer you my thoughts on the points in question. I say the points in question; and I have intimated that there are points in debate, questions of conscience in business, which are brought into the most serious controversy. I have even known conscientious and sensible men, themselves engaged in trade, to go to the length of asserting, not only that the principles of trade are immoral and unchristian, but that no man can acquire a property in this commerce without sacrificing a good conscience; that no prosperous merchant can be a good Christian. I certainly think that such casuists are wrong; but whether or not they are so, the principles which bring them to a conclusion so extraordinary, evidently demand investigation.

In preparing to examine this opinion, and indeed to discuss the whole subject, it will not be improper to observe in the outset, that trade in some form is the inevitable result of the human condition. Better, it has been said—on the supposition already stated—better that commerce should perish than Christianity; but let it be considered whether commerce can perish. Nothing can be more evident than that the earth was formed to be the theatre of trade. Not only does the ocean facilitate commerce, but the diversity of soils, climes, and products, requires it. So long as one district of country produces cotton, and another corn; so long as one man lives by an ore-bed which produces iron, and another on pasture-lands which grow wool, there must be commerce. In addition to this, let it be considered, that all human industry inevitably tends to what is called "the division of labour." The savage who roams through the wilderness, may possibly, in the lowest state of barbarism, procure with his own hand all that suffices for his miserable accommodation,—the coat of skins that clothes, the food that sustains, and the hut that shelters him. But the moment that society departs from that state, there necessarily arise the different occupations of shepherd, agriculturist, mechanic, and manufacturer; the products of whose industry are to be exchanged; and this exchange is trade. If a single individual were to perform all the operations necessary to produce a piece of cloth, and yet more, a garment of that cloth, the process would be exceedingly slow and expensive. Human intelligence necessarily avails itself of the facility, the dexterity, and the advantage every way, which are to be obtained by a division of labour. The very progress of society is indicated by the gradual and growing development of this tendency.

Besides, it has been justly observed by a celebrated writer on this subject,* that "there is a certain propensity in human nature to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another. It is common to all men," he says, "and to be found in no other race of animals, which seem to know neither this nor any other species of contracts. Nobody," he observes, "ever saw a dog make a fair and deliberate exchange of one bone for another with another dog. Nobody ever saw one animal by its gestures and natural cries signify to another, this is mine, that yours; I am willing to give this for that."

* Adam Smith.

Trade, then, being a part of the inevitable lot of cultivated humanity, the question is, not about abolishing, but about the moral principles that are to regulate it. And the grand question that I propose now to examine is the only one that presses upon the conscience, and therefore proper for discussion in the pulpit; and one, too, of daily recurrence—the question, that is, about the moral law of contracts. The question, to state it more definitely, is, whether in making contracts it is right for one party to take any advantage, or to make any use, and if any, what, of his superior sagacity, information, or power of any kind?

Let us first inquire, how we are to settle this question. What is the process of mind by which we are to ascertain and establish the moral laws of trade?

Does the natural conscience declare them? Is there any instinctive prompting of conscience that can properly decide each case as it arises in the course of business? Is there any voice within that says clearly and with authority, "thou shalt do thus, and so?" I think not. The cases are not many, in any department of action, where conscience thus reveals itself: but in business they are peculiarly rare, because the questions there are unusually complicated. You offer to sell to your neighbour an article of merchandise. You are entitled of course—*i. e.* in ordinary circumstances—to some advance upon what it cost you. But what that is, depends on many circumstances. Conscience will hardly mark down the just price in your account-book. Conscience, indeed, commands us to do right; but the question is, what is right? This is to be decided by views far more various and comprehensive, than the simple sense of right and wrong.

The Scriptures, like conscience, are a general directory. They do not lay down any specific moral laws of trade. They command us to be upright and honest; but they leave us to consider what particular actions are required by those principles. They command us to do unto others as we would have them do to us; but still this is not specific. A man may unreasonably wish that another should sell him a piece of goods at half its value. Does it follow that he himself ought to sell on those terms? The truth is, that the golden rule, like every other in Scripture, is a general maxim. It simply requires us to desire the welfare of others, as we would have them desire ours. But the specific actions answering to that rule, it leaves us to determine by a wise discretion. The dictates of that discretion, under the governance of the moral law, are the principles that we seek to discover.

Neither, on this subject, can I accept, without question, the teachings of the common law: because I find that its ablest expounders acknowledge that its decisions are sometimes at variance with strict moral principle. I do not think it follows from this, that the general principles of the common law are wrong, or abet wrong. Nay, I conceive that they may approach as near to rectitude as is possible in the circumstances, and yet necessarily involve some practical injustice in their operation. This results, in fact, from their very utility, their very perfection, as a body of laws. For it is requisite to their utility, that they should be general, that they should be derived from precedents, and formed into rules; else men will not know what to depend upon, nor how to govern themselves; and there would neither be confidence, nor order, nor society. But

general rules must sometimes bear hard upon individuals; the very law which secures justice in a thousand cases, may, and perhaps must, from the very nature of human affairs and relationships, do injustice in one. Indeed, the law of chancery, or of equity, has been devised on purpose to give relief. But even chancery has its rules, which sometimes press injuriously upon individual interests; and no human laws can attain to a perfect and unerring administration of justice. For this perfect justice, however, we seek. We are asking what it is to do no wrong to our fellow-man, whether the law permits it or not. We are asking how we shall stand acquitted, not merely at the bar of our country, but at the bar of conscience and of God.

I must add, in fine, that questions about right and wrong in the contracts of trade, are not to be decided by any hasty impulses of feeling, or suggestions of a generous temper. I have often found men, in conversation on this subject, appealing to their feelings; but, however much I have respected those feelings, it has seemed to me that they were not the proper tribunal. Nay, they have often appeared to me to mistake the point at issue. If a merchant has a large store of provisions in a time of scarcity, would it not be a very noble and praiseworthy thing, it is said, for him to dispose of his stock without enhancing the price? But the proper question is, not what is generous, but what is just. And besides, he cannot be generous, or, what is the same thing in effect, he cannot establish a generous principle in the distribution of his store. For if he sells in large quantities, selling, that is, at a low rate, it will avail nothing, because the subordinate dealers will raise the price; or, if he undertakes to sell to each family what it wants, any one of them may take the article to the next warehouse, and dispose of it at the enhanced price. On the contrary, there are circumstances, undoubtedly, in which a man may take undue advantage of a monopoly; but this will be a case for future consideration. For the present it is sufficient to observe, what I think must be obvious, that the great question before us is to be decided, not by any enactments of law, nor any immediate dictate of conscience, or specific teaching of Scripture, or single impulse of good feeling, but by broad and large views of the whole subject. Conscience, and Scripture, and right feeling, are to govern us; but it is only under the guidance of sound reasoning.

Let me beg your indulgence to one or two further preliminary observations. The questions to be discussed are of great importance, and scarcely of less difficulty. It is hardly possible to overrate the importance of a high, and at the same time just, tone of commercial morality. I am addressing merchants, and young men who are to be the future merchants, of this city and country. I am addressing them on the morality of their daily lives, on the principles that are to form their character for time and eternity, and, while I task myself to speak with the utmost care and deliberation, I shall not be thought unreasonable, I trust, if I invite the patient attention of those who hear me, to share in the task.

There is, then, on this subject, a distinction to be made between principles and rules. Principles—the principles that is to say of truth, justice, and beneficence, are clear and immutable; the only difficulty is about the application of them—*i. e.* about rules. Principles, I say, are to be set apart, at once and entirely, from all doubt and uncertainty.

They hold their place on high, like unchanging lights in the heavens. The only question is, how, in obedience to their direction, we are faithfully and surely to work our traverse across the troubled ocean of business. Here, I say, is all the difficulty. Rules, I repeat, result from the application of principles to human conduct, and they must be affected by the circumstances to which they relate. Thus, it is an immutable principle in morals, that I should love my neighbour, my fellow-being, and desire to promote his happiness. This principle admits of no qualification; it can suffer no abatement in any circumstances. But when I come to consider what I shall *do* in obedience to this principle; what I shall do for the poor, the sick, or the distressed; by what acts I shall show my kindness to my neighbour, or my interest in the welfare of the world—when, in other words, I come to consider the *rules* of my conduct, I am obliged at once to admit doubts and difficulties. The abstract principle cannot be my law without any regard to circumstances, though some moral reformers would make it such. I must go on the right line of conduct, it is true; but where that line shall lead me, is to be determined by a fair consideration of the cases that come before me. If it is not, I shall contravene the very principle on which I am acting. If, for instance, I do nothing but give, give to the poor, I shall be doing them an injury, not a kindness. The great law of benevolence, in fact, as truly requires discretion as it enforces action.

This distinction fully applies to the subject we are about to examine. Rectitude, justice, benevolence, truth-telling, are immutable laws of trade, as they are of all human conduct. There is no *certain extent* to which they go; they apply without limit to every department and every transaction in business; they are never to be contravened. But in laying down practical rules for traffic, we immediately meet with difficulties, and are obliged to leave a great deal to the honest judgment of the trader. He must do right, indeed; that is the great law: but what *is* right? Let us now more nearly approach this question, having narrowed it down to a question about rules, and more closely apply ourselves to the difficulties involved in it.

And here I must ask you to consider, as a further and final preliminary topic, the language of the legal writers on this subject. It is common with those writers to make a distinction between moral and legal justice; or, in other words, between the demands of conscience and the decisions of their courts. Conscience, for instance, demands that a certain contract shall be annulled, because there was some concealment or deception; but the courts will not annul it, unless the injury be very great. In short, it is a matter of degrees. Up to a certain extent, the law will, in fact, protect a man in doing what is wrong, in doing that which violates his conscience; beyond a certain extent, it will not protect him. This distinction is founded on the policy of the law, and the policy of trade. "In law," says Pothier, "a party will not be permitted to complain of slight offences, which he, with whom a contract is made, has committed against good faith; otherwise there would be too many contracts to be rescinded; which would open the way for too much litigation, and would derange commerce."* And again: "The interests of commerce will not easily permit parties to

* Traité des Obligations, Part I. ch. 1, sec. 1. Art. 3, § 3.

escape from bargains which they have concluded; they must lay the blame to their not having been better informed concerning the defects of the article sold."* And again he says: "This rule is wisely established for the security and freedom of commerce, which demand that no one should easily be off from his bargains; otherwise men would not dare to make contracts, for fear that he with whom they had bargained should imagine that he was injured, and upon that ground (of mere imagination or pretence) should commence an action."† Hence, Pothier says, that the wrong of which the courts will take cognizance must be an enormous wrong.

Now, there is, doubtless, a certain expediency here; a certain policy of trade, a certain policy of the law. It is expedient that a fair field be opened in business for ingenuity, sagacity, and attention; and that ignorance, indolence, and neglect, should meet with loss. "The common law," says Chancellor Kent, "affords to every one reasonable protection against fraud in dealing; but it does not go the romantic length of giving indemnity against the consequences of indolence and folly, or a careless indifference to the ordinary and accessible means of information."‡

What is the nature, and what is the amount of this concession to expediency? Let us carefully consider this question, for much depends upon it.

Legal expediency, then, is not to be so construed as to warrant the supposition, that it lends a sanction to what is wrong. It may, from necessity, permit or protect fraud, but does not abet it. A man is not to consider himself an honest man, simply because the law gives him deliverance. For the law *cannot* take cognizance of the secret intentions, nor of slight deviations from truth. If every man who says he has got a bad bargain, and who thinks he has been cheated, could be heard in court, our tribunals would be overwhelmed with business. No human tribunal can descend to the minutiæ of injustice. But the law, I repeat, does not sanction what it does not undertake to prevent, any more than the infinite providence sanctions those abuses which arise from its great law of freedom.

This being the nature of the concession to expediency—no principle being compromised—we may say, that the extent of the concession must be considerable. It is certainly expedient that every man be put upon his own discretion, sagacity, and attention for success. In business, as in everything else, a premium is set upon these qualities by the hand of providence. It is expedient, in other words, that every man should take care of himself. Others are not to step forward at every turn, to rescue him from the consequences of his indolence or inattention. The seller is not required to give his *opinion* to the buyer. If he *knows* of any defect in his merchandise, not apparent to the buyer, he is bound to state it; but he is not required to give his opinion. The buyer has no business to ask it of him; he is to form an opinion for himself. If he is relieved from doing this he will always remain in a sort of mercantile childhood.

Nor do I know that there is anything in Scripture, or in the laws of

* Traité du Contrat de Vente, Part II. ch. 2. Art. 2.
† Traité des Obligations, Part I. ch. 1, sec. 1. Art. 3, § 4.
‡ Commentaries.

human brotherhood, that forbids this honest, not fraudulent, but honest competition between men's exertions, faculties, and wits. We are indeed to do to others as we would have them do to us; but we ought not to wish them to do anything to us which is inconsistent with the general welfare of the community, with the lawful and necessary stimulants to action. We may have unreasonable desires: we would wish, perhaps, that our rich neighbour should present us with half of his fortune; but unreasonable desires are not the measure of our duties. Not *whatever* we wish, but what we *lawfully* wish from others, should we do to them. And lawfully, we can no more wish that they should give to our indolence and negligence the benefit of their sagacity and alertness in making a contract, than that they would give to our poverty the half of that wealth which their superior industry or talent had earned for them. Thus, too, when it is said that we ought to treat all men as brethren, it is true, indeed, so far as that relation is expressive of the general relationships of society. But while there should be a brotherly community of feeling, there cannot be a brotherly identity of interests between the members of society; and, therefore, they are not bound to deal with one another as if they belonged to a community of Shakers or of New Harmony men. We are not to break down the principle of individuality, of individual interests, of individual aims; while, at the same time, we are to hold it in subjection to the laws of sacred honesty and of a wise philanthropy.

Besides, it is not only expedient and right, but it is inevitable, that individual power and talent should come into play in business. A man's sagacity, it is obvious, he must use—that is to say, his mind he must use—for he has nothing else to go by. He may use it unjustly, to the heinous injury of his weaker neighbour; but still he must use it. So also with regard to the power acquired by a large property, or by a monopoly, it is inevitable that it should be used. To some extent, the possessor cannot help using it. Wealth has credit; and monopoly, usually implying scarcity, carries an enhanced price with it; and such results are unavoidable. Finally, superior actual knowledge may and must be used to some extent. In every department of business, superior knowledge is gained by attention; and it may and must be acted upon, albeit to the hurt or injury of those who know less, or have devoted less time and thought to the subject. A man has made an improvement in some machinery or manufacture, and he is entitled to some reward for the attention he has given to it; the government will give him a patent. A man has been to India or to South America, to acquaint himself with a certain branch of business, and he comes home and acts upon his knowledge, and has a perfect right to do so. He is not bound to communicate his knowledge to his brother merchants who are engaged in the same trade; and, perhaps, his knowledge so much depends upon actual observation and experience, that he cannot communicate it. In like manner, a trader may obtain a superior knowledge of business, and of the facts on which it depends, by a close observation of things immediately around him, and he must act upon it; he cannot employ himself in going about to see whether other men have got the same enlarged views. Nor have other men any right to complain of this. The unskilful painter or sculptor, the ignorant lawyer or physician, might as well complain, that their more distinguished brethren

were injuring their business, and taking all the prizes out of their hands.

I have thus attempted to set forth the claims of individual enterprize, as having a useful, a beneficent tendency. These claims, I have all along implied, are subject to certain limitations; and these limitations are set by the laws of honesty and philanthropy. That is to say, a man may pursue his own interest; he may use his endeavour, sagacity, ability; but, in the first place, he shall not pursue any traffic, or make any contract, to the injury of his neighbour; unless that injury is one that inevitably results from a general and good principle, that is to say, from the healthful action of business; and, in the next place, he shall not pursue his own ends to the extent of committing any fraud.

This last limitation is the one of the most palpable importance, and demands that we should dwell upon it a moment. What then is a fraud in contracts? In order to answer the question, let me ask, what is a contract? A contract is a mutual engagement, to exchange certain goods for other goods, or certain goods for money, and the essence of the engagement lies in the supposed equivalency of the things that are exchanged. This results from the very nature of the case and of the human mind; for it is not the part of a rational being to give more for less. If you bargain away anything to your neighbour, you, of course, seek from him what to you is equivalent. But how are you to judge of this equivalency; of the value, that is to say, of the article offered to you? There are two grounds on which you may judge: you may know the article as well as the seller; you may know as much about it every way as he does. This is ordinarily the case between trader and trader; but between the merchant and the rest of the world this is usually not the case. And here the ground on which you proceed is, that of confidence in the good faith of the seller. You could make up no satisfactory opinion on the value of the article offered to you, if you did not believe that it is what it purports to be, what it appears to be, what the price indicates it to be. If, then, there is any secret defect in the article not apparent to you, or if there is any circumstance unknown to you, materially affecting its value, or if the price set upon it is any other than the market price, *there* is fraud. Wherever the contracting parties stand in totally different relations to the matter in hand, the one knowing something, some secret, which the other does not and cannot know, *there* is fraud: the contract is morally vitiated; the obvious conditions of a contract are not complied with; it is well known by one of the parties that the grand condition, that of equivalency, does not exist in the case.

Let us now look back, for a moment, upon the ground which we have passed over in this preliminary discussion. I have, in the first place, attempted to show that no single suggestion or dictate of conscience, or Scripture, or of generous feeling, or of the law, is sufficient to solve the moral questions that arise in trade. In the next place, I have said that there is a distinction to be made between principles and rules: the principles of moral conduct being clear and certain; the rules only, the specific actions under these principles that is to say, being liable to doubt. I thus wished to set one department of this subject above all question. In the third place, I applied myself to the consideration of rules. And here I attempted to show that while, on

the one hand, it is expedient that ample scope be given to human ingenuity, sagacity, and alertness in business, yet, on the other hand, that they are never to transgress the bounds of philanthropy, honesty, and justice.

Let us now proceed to examine some of the cases to which these general reasonings apply.

I. The first is the ordinary case of buying and selling, *i. e.* under ordinary circumstances.

And here it is expedient and necessary, that men in their dealings with one another should be put to the use of their senses and faculties. There is a discretion and there is a duty proper, respectively, to the seller and to the buyer. Each of them has his part to act, his business to attend to, and neither of them is bound to assume the duty of the other. In ordinary cases there is no difficulty with this maxim, no temptation to dishonesty, no possibility of deception.

The article is open to inspection; its qualities are as obvious to the buyer as to the seller. The buyer is supposed to know his own business, his own occasions; the *buyer* is fairly supposed best to know what the article is worth to him, not the seller; and it is for him to decide whether he will purchase, and what he will give. The seller cannot be expected to enter into the circumstances of the buyer, and to ascertain by inquiry what he intends to do with the article he purchases; whether he can turn it to good account, or whether he could not buy more advantageously somewhere else; all this belongs to the province of the buyer, it is his business to settle all these questions. And he is not only best able to decide them, but he is as competent to judge of the quality of the goods which are offered him as the seller, for they are alike open to the inspection of both.

This free action, this competition, we have already said, is to be restrained in trade as in everything else, by perfect fairness and honesty. At that point in our preliminary discussion, the theoretical question about the nature of a contract presented itself; in our present inquiry, the natural and practical question is about price. What is the just price of an article? A man has something to sell; he wishes to deal honestly; the question then is, what shall he ask for it? If he can settle this question, all is plain. How shall he settle it? What is it that determines a price to be just? Evidently not any abstract consideration of value. There can be no such thing as abstract value. The worth of a thing depends on the want of it. Originally, it is true, *i. e.* in the first rude state of society, men, in exchanging the products of their labour, would naturally estimate the value of each article by the labour required to produce it. But even this estimate, though approaching nearest to it, would not present us with an abstract and absolute value; and it would soon be disturbed by circumstances effectually and beyond recovery. Labour would not be an accurate measure of value, because one man's labour, through its energy and ingenuity, would be worth far more than another man's. That primitive rule, too, inaccurate as it is, would soon, I repeat, be disturbed by circumstances. For suppose that one man had manufactured axes, and another shoes, circumstances would inevitably arise that would give one or another of these articles a factitious value. In the winter season, when protection was needed for the person, and in the summer,

which was favourable to the felling of timber, the value of those articles must be constantly fluctuating; it would be factitious; it could not be determined by the amount of labour. And as we depart farther from those primitive exchanges, we find circumstances, numerous, complicated, and very artificial, which affect value. The wants, fancies, and fashions of society; the state of crops and markets, and of trade all over the world; the variations of the seasons; the success or failure of fisheries; improvements in machinery; discoveries in art; and the regulations of governments—all these things, and many more, conspire alternately to fix and disturb, from day to day, that ever-fluctuating thing called price. It is not any one man's judgment or conscience that can ascertain the value of anything, but millions of individual judgments go to make up the decision. It is in vain to say that such and such things are worth little or nothing; that they are unnecessary or useless, or that they confer no advantage proportionate to their cost—that is not the question. What will they fetch? is the question. You may, in a fit of generosity or a scruple of conscience, sell them for less; but the moment they are out of your hands, they will rise to the level of the market; you have lost the difference, and gained nothing for your generous principle. In fine, *the value of a thing is the market price of it.* This is the only intelligible idea of value, and the only reasonable adjustment of price. It is certainly most likely to be reasonable; for a multitude of judgments have been employed upon it, and have settled it. It is the legislative voice of the whole world; and it would be as unjust and inexpedient, as it is impossible, to resist it.

The way of honesty, then, in the ordinary course of traffic, seems to be very clear. The terms on which we are to buy and sell, are established for us by a very obvious rule. In a general view, we may say, that conscience has nothing to do with affixing a price: that is determined by a thousand circumstances and a million voices. The trader must *buy* at the market price, and he must sell accordingly. *He* does not determine the price, but the suffrage of a whole city, or of twenty cities, determines it. All that conscience has to do with price therefore is, not to go beyond the usage of the market: and for the rest, the rule is, to make no false representation, and to conceal no latent defect.

In this view, the moral course in almost the entire business of trade seems to be exceedingly plain; and certainly it is most grateful to reflect that it is so. He that runs may read. No man needs to carry with him, in regard to most of the transactions of business, a disturbed or a doubtful conscience.

But still cases will arise for a nicer casuistry. The market price is indeed the rule; but there is monopoly that makes a market price, and there is superior information that takes undue advantage of it. These are the cases that remain to be examined.

II. The next case then to be considered in the morals of business, is monopoly. This may arise in two ways; intentionally, from combination on the part of several traders, or a plan on the part of one; and unintentionally, where it falls out in the natural and unforced course of trade. It is from confounding these two cases together, perhaps, that a peculiar prejudice is felt in the community against monopoly. That a man should set himself by dexterous management to get into his

possession all the corn in market, in order to extort an enormous price for it, is felt to be oppressive and wrong. But there is often a monopoly, to a greater or less degree, resulting from simple scarcity; and in this case, that enhancement of price which is so odious is perfectly inevitable; nay, it may be even beneficial; for high prices lessen consumption, and may prevent famine. But at any rate, high prices in a time of scarcity are inevitable. Even if all the corn or all the coal were in the hands of one man, and he should sell the half of his stock to the wholesale dealers at a moderate rate, and hold the remainder at the same rate to keep the price down, still, I say, the moment the article left his hands, the law of scarcity would prevail and raise the price. Monopoly therefore compels, and of course justifies an enhanced price. The same principle which applies to every other commodity, applies to that commodity called money. And it is only from the habit of considering money not as a commodity, but as a possession of some peculiar and magical value, that any prejudice can exist against what is called usurious interest; saving and excepting when the interest goes beyond all bounds of reason and humanity. The practice of usury has acquired a bad name from former and still occasional abuses of it: but the principle must still be a just one, that money, in common with everything else, is worth what it will fetch.

This, I know, is denied. It is denied, especially, that money is, or is to be regarded, like other commodities in trade. It is said that money is the creature of the government; that the mint, when stamping it with the government impress, stamps it with a peculiar character, and separates it entirely from the general condition of a commodity. It is said, too, that the common representative of money—that the bank-note, that credit, in other words—is exposed to such expansion and contraction, and management and conspiracy, that it is peculiarly liable to be used for the injury of the necessitous and unwary.

Let us separate this last allegation from our discussion for a moment, and consider the question alone, as it affects the use of money in the form of bullion. And I know of no better way of considering questions of this sort, than to resolve them into their simple forms, by going back to the origin of society, or taking for example a small and isolated community, at least we come to the theory of the question by this means, and can then consider what modifications are required by more artificial and complicated interests.

Suppose then a community of a hundred families, cut off from the rest of the world, engaged in the various callings of life, accustomed to barter, but not accustomed to the use of money. Suppose now that a gold-mine were discovered. The metal is found to be very valuable for various purposes; and, like every thing else, it takes its value in the market; an ounce of it is exchanged for so many bushels of corn or yards of cloth. But the permanent and universal value of this metal, and its being so portable and indestructible, would, ere long, very naturally bring it into use as a circulating medium; the farmer would know that if he sold corn for it, he could buy cloth with it in another part of the district, and would be glad thus to be saved the trouble and expense of transporting the produce of his farm to the distant manufactory. In this exchange, the lumps of gold of course would be weighed, and it would be natural to stamp the weight upon each lump.

But another step would follow from all this. As there would be the trouble of constantly weighing this circulating medium, and the danger of mistake and deception, the community would appoint a committée, or depute its government, if it had one, to do this very thing; and the metal would be cast into various quantities, bearing distinct denominations, to answer more fully the purposes of a convenient circulating medium. Here then we have a mint, and here we have money. Nobody will deny that it was a commodity when each man dug it from the earth, and exchanged it at his pleasure. But the action of the government confers no peculiar character on it. The government simply weighs the metal, and affixes, as it were, a label to it; *i. e.* stamps it as coin, to tell what it is worth. It does not create its value, but simply indicates it.

I am sensible that many questions may still be asked, but I have not space here, if I had ability, to enter into them; and besides, if this is a just theory of the value of the specie currency, it may itself suggest the necessary answers. But the great practical difficulties arise from the use of a paper currency. If the paper were strictly the representative of gold and silver—if the issue of bank-notes did not exceed the specie actually in vault, and thus were used only for convenience, the same principles would apply as before. All other paper does not represent money, but credit; *i. e.* it represents the presumed ability of a man to pay what he promises; not his known and ascertained property. And the question is, may credit be bought and sold in the market like any commodity?

Let us again attempt to simplify the question. You want money let us suppose, and you go to a money-lender, and ask for it. He says, "I have not the money, but I shall have it in a month hence, and I will give my note, payable at that time." This may answer the purpose with your creditor; and the question now is, what interest shall you pay? Shall credit take its place in the market like money, or like a commodity? Shall we say that the government has no business to interfere in this matter, with its usury laws, obliging a man to sell his paper for seven per cent? Shall we say that all this ought to be left to regulate itself, and that every man shall be left free to act according to his pleasure?

I certainly feel some hesitation, from deference for the opinions of some able men who are more studious in these matters than I am, about answering this question in the affirmative. There are relations and bearings of that immense and complicated subject, the monetary system, which I may not understand; and usury, perhaps, is connected with that system in ways that are beyond my comprehension. But looking at the question now, in the light of simple justice, separating all unlawful combination and conspiracy from the case, and all deception and dishonesty, I cannot see why a man has not a right to sell his credit for what another is willing to give for it. If a lawyer has so elevated himself above his brethren, that his opinion is worth, not twenty but five hundred per cent more than theirs, he takes that advance for his counsel. Why, then, shall not a merchant, who by the same laborious means, has acquired a fortune and a high commercial reputation, be allowed a similar advantage?

We say, why should he not dispose of his credit, or, in other words,

pledge his property at such prices as it will naturally bear? But the truth is, that he cannot prevent this result, let him do what he will. He may sell his paper at one half per cent a month, but the moment it is out of his hands, it will rise to two or three per cent, if that be its real value. I say nothing now about obedience to the usury laws; I do not touch the point of conscience in that respect: but I believe that the laws themselves are both impolitic and unjust; unjust, because they conflict with the real value of things; and impolitic, because they never were, and never can be executed, and, in fact, because they only increase the rates of interest, by increasing the risk.

But is there, then, no limit, it may be said, to the advantage which one man may take of the necessities of another? To ask this question in regard to the lender of money, is but the same thing as to ask it in regard to the man in every other relationship of life. The duties of humanity, of philanthropy, of natural affection, can never be abrogated by any circumstances; and the only question is, what line of conduct, in the case before us, is conformable to those duties? That question cannot, I think, be brought within the compass of any assignable rules; and must be left for every man seriously to consider for himself. He is put upon his conscience in this respect, as he is in every other case in life.

III. But the hardest case to determine is that on which the question is raised, about the use of superior information. And perhaps this question cannot be better stated than in the celebrated case put by Cicero.* A corn-merchant of Alexandria, he says, arrived at Rhodes in a time of great scarcity, with a cargo of grain, and with knowledge that a number of other vessels, laden with corn, had already sailed from Alexandria for Rhodes, and which he had passed on the passage—was he bound in conscience to inform the buyers of that fact? Cicero decides that he was. Several modern writers on law dissent from his opinion—as Grotius, Puffendorf, and Pothier himself, though with very careful qualifications.†

It appears to me, that the answer to Cicero's question must depend on the views which are taken of a contract. If a contract is a mere arbitrary convention; if business is a game, a mere contest of men's wits; if every man has a right to make the best bargain he can; if society really has power to ordain that such shall be the laws of trade, then the decision will be one way. But if a contract implies in its very nature the obligation of fair dealing and truth telling, then the decision will be the other way. The supposition is, that the Alexandrine trader concealed a certain fact, for the sake of asking a price which he knew would not have been given had that fact been public. Now what is implied in asking a price? What does a man say, when he sets a certain price on his merchandise? Does he, or does he not say, that the price he asks is, in his opinion, the fair value of the article? I think he does. If you did not so understand him, you would not trade with him. If you observed a lurking sneer on his lip, such as there must be in his heart, when he knows that he is taking you in, you would have nothing to do with him. The very transaction, called a

* De Officiis, Lib. 3, sec. 12-17.

† Traité du Contrat de Vente, Part II. ch. 2, Art. 3.

contract, implies that degree of good faith. If this be true, if it be universally understood, that he who asks a price professes in that very act to ask a fair and just price, and if, moreover, he has a letter in his pocket assuring and satisfying him that it is not the just price, then he is guilty of falsehood. If the Alexandrine trader had asked a price, graduated exactly by his opinion of the probability that other vessels would soon arrive, and of the amount of the supply they would bring, his conduct would have been fair and honest. But if he had concealed facts within his knowledge, for the sake of asking an enormous price, or any price beyond what he knew to be the fair value, he would be guilty of falsehood and dishonesty. And the reason is, I repeat, that the very basis of a contract is mutual advantage; that its very essence lies in a supposed equivalency; that he who sets a price is understood to say as much as this, "I think the article is worth it." And if you allow a man to swerve from this truth and good faith at all, where will you stop? Suppose that the people of Rhodes had been suffering the horrors of famine, and the Alexandrine merchant had taken advantage of their situation to exact from them all their disposable property as the price of life, and had borne off that mass of treasure, all the while knowing that bountiful supplies were at hand—what should we have said? We should have said that his perfidy was equal to his cruelty—that he was both a pirate and a villain. But if a man may be guilty of falsehood in one degree, what principle is to prevent his being guilty of it in another? I know what may be said on the other hand. The master of the Alexandrine ship, it may be said, had outstripped the others by superior sailing; and this superiority in the management of his ship may have been the fruit of a whole life of industry and ingenuity. He had also been on the alert, it may be supposed; had watched the course of the markets while others slept, and had been ready with his supply to meet the exigency which all others, even the Rhodians themselves, had been too dull to foresee. Is he not entitled to some premium for all this? Nay, but for the prospect held out of such a reward, the Rhodians might have starved. And yet if he gives the information in question, he loses the premium. No, the merchants of Rhodes say, "we will wait till to-morrow." But again, to-morrow comes, the vessels arrive, the market is glutted, and the Alexandrine trader loses money on his voyage. Will the merchants of Rhodes make it up to him, on account of his generosity in giving them the information? Not at all. "We buy at the market price," they say; "we cannot afford any more; if we give more we are losers;" and thus the Alexandrine, by neglecting his own interests, and taking care of other people, loses not only his voyage, but his whole fortune perhaps, and becomes a bankrupt; and by becoming a bankrupt, he injures those he is most bound to serve—his confiding friends, and beggared family. All this is a very good reason, to be sure, why the Alexandrine trader should be rewarded for his exertions; but it is not any good reason, nor *can* there *ever* be any good reason, why a man should tell a falsehood, why he should make a false impression, why he should deceive his neighbour.

Do we then propose to reduce the wise and the ignorant, the sagacious and the stupid, the attentive and the negligent, the active and the indolent, to the same level? Must the intelligent and the enterprising

merchant raise up his dull and careless neighbour to his own point of view, before he may deal with him? Certainly not. Let a wide field be opened, only provided that the boundaries be truth and honesty. Let the widest field for activity and freedom of action be spread, which these boundaries can enclose.

Indeed, a man *must* act in trade upon some opinion; that opinion must be founded on some knowledge; and that knowledge he may properly seek. Nay, and he may use it to any extent, not implying deception or dishonesty. Nor are the cases frequent in which commercial operations possess any such definite or extraordinary character as admits of deception. It does not often happen that any great advantage is or can be taken of complete and unsuspecting ignorance. Men are wary. They will not make questionable sales, when a packet ship from abroad is in the offing. They are set to guard their own interests, and they do guard them. They must assume some responsibilities in this way; they must take some risks. They are liable to err in opinion, and they must take such chance as human imperfection ordains for them. Business, like every other scene of human life, is a theatre for imperfection, for error, for effort, for opinion, and for their results. I do not see how it can possibly be otherwise, and therefore I consider it as appointed to be so. Undue advantage may be taken of this state of things by the selfish, grasping, and unconscientious; right principles may be wrested to the accomplishment of wrong ends; a system of commercial morality may be good for the community, and yet may be abused by individuals: all this is true; and yet the doctrine which applies everywhere else must apply here, that abuse fairly argues nothing against use.

Let us see how the case would stand if it were otherwise: let us see what the assumption on the part of the trading community, that no man should ever act in any way on superior information, would amount to. "We may sleep," they would say; "we need not take any pains to inform ourselves of the state of the markets; we need not take a step from our own door. If our neighbour comes to trade with us, he must first inform us of everything affecting the price of our goods. He makes himself very busy; and he shall have his labour for his pains; for the rule now is, that indolence is to fare as well as activity, and vigilance is to have no advantage over supineness and sloth." Suppose, then, that the vigilant and active man is up betimes, and goes down upon the wharf, or to the news-room, and becomes apprised of facts that affect the price of his goods, he must not go about selling till he has stepped into the shop of his indolent neighbour, and perhaps of half a dozen such, to inform *them* of the state of things; for although he does not directly trade with them, yet, by underselling or selling for more, in consequence of superior information, he injures them just as much as if he did; *i. e.* he takes profits out of the hands of the slothful, by acting on his superior knowledge. But now enlarge the sphere of the comparison. There is no real difference in the principle between a man's going down to the wharf, and his going to Europe for information. And if, by superior activity, by building better ships, and better manning them, he is accustomed to get earlier advices of the state of foreign markets, I see not, but as a general principle—a principle advantageous to commerce, and encouraging to human industry and ingenuity,—he must be allowed to avail himself of those advices. The law of general

expediency must be a law for the conscience. It is expedient that there should be commerce or barter; nay, it is inevitable. It is expedient that industry and attention should be rewarded, and that negligence and sloth should suffer loss. It is expedient, therefore, that all that sagacity, power, and information, which are the result of superior talent, energy, and ingenuity, should yield certain advantages to their possessor. These advantages he may push beyond the bounds of reason and justice; but we must not, on that account, be deterred from maintaining a principle which is right, a principle which is expedient and necessary for the whole community.

And is not the same principle, in fact, adopted in every department of human pursuit? Two men engage in a certain branch of manufactures. The one, by his attention and ingenuity, makes discoveries in his art, and thus gains advantages over his indolent or dull neighbour. Is he obliged to impart to him his superior information? Two young men in the profession of the law are distinguished, the one for hard study, the other for idleness. They are engaged in the same cause; and the one perceives that the other is making a false point in the case. Is he obliged to go over to his brother's office, and explain to him his error; or is it not proper, rather, that both himself and his client should suffer for that error, when the cause comes to be argued in open court?

In fine, I hold that a distinction is to be made between general information and definite knowledge. If a man *knows* that an article is worth more than he buys it for, or less than he sells it for, he does not act with truth and integrity. It is just as if he knew the article were more or less in quantity than he alleges it to be. But if he acts on general information, open alike to all; if he acts on mere opinion, in which he may be mistaken; if he has no certain knowledge of the merchandise in question, but only a judgment, he is entitled to the full benefit of that judgment; while he is liable, at the same time, to the full injury of it, if it be mistaken.

But in regard to absolute certainty, how, I would ask, are we to distinguish between knowledge in regard to the real value of an article from knowledge in regard to the real quality of an article? If I sell merchandise in which there is some secret defect, and do not expose that defect, I am held to be a dishonest man. But what matters it to my conscience whether the secret defect lies in the article, or in the price? It comes to the same thing with my fellow-dealer. If I were to sell moth-eaten cloths at four dollars per yard more than they were worth—the defect known to me and not to my neighbour—all the world would pronounce me a knave. But there is another sort of moth, a secret in my own keeping, which may have as effectually eaten out four dollars from every yard of that cloth, as if it had literally cut the thread of the fabric. What difference now can it make to my neighbour, whether advantage is taken of his ignorance in one way or another, in regard to the quality or the price? The only material point is the value, and that is equally affected in either case. This is the only conclusion to which I find myself able, on much reflection, to arrive. Knowledge of prices is as material to the value of merchandise as knowledge of its qualities. This knowledge, therefore, as it appears to me, should be common to all contracting parties. I cannot think that a trader is to be like a fisher, disguising his hook with bait; or like a sleight-of-hand

man, cheating men out of their senses and money with a face of gravity; or like an Indian, shooting from behind a bush, himself in no danger. Trade, traffic, contracts, bargains—all these words imply parity, equivalency, common risk, mutual advantage; and he who can arrange a commercial operation, by which he is *certain* to realize great profits and to inflict great losses, is a taker of merchandise, but can hardly be said to be a trader in it.

I am sensible that this is the nice and difficult point in the whole discussion. But, I put it to the calm reflection and to the consciences of my hearers, whether they would not feel easier in their business, if all use of superior and certain knowledge were entirely excluded from it. Long as this use has obtained, and warmly as it is sometimes defended, yet, I ask, if the moral sentiments of the trading community itself would not be relieved by giving it up? This, if it be true, is certainly a weighty consideration. I admit, indeed, as I have before done, that no vague sentiment is to settle the question. But when I find that there is, even in vague sentiment, something like a hook that holds the mind in suspense, or will not let the mind be satisfied with departure from it, that circumstance deserves, I think, to arrest attention. I will frankly confess, that my own mind has been in this very situation. I did not see, at one time, how the case of general information and opinion, which it is lawful to use, could be separated from the case of particular knowledge; but I now entertain a different and a more decided opinion; and the consideration, with me, which has changed uneasiness into doubt, and doubt into a new, and, as I think, corrected judgment, is that which I have last stated—it is the consideration, that is to say, of the *very nature of a contract*. A contract does *not* imply equal powers, equal general information, equal shrewdness, in the contracting parties; but it does imply, as it appears to me, equal actual knowledge. My neighbour may think himself superior to me in all other respects, and he may tell me so, and yet I will trade with him; we will stand upon ground that I am willing to consider equal. But let him tell me that he *knows* something touching the manufacture, quality, condition, or relations of the article to be sold, which I do not know, and which affects the value of the article, and I stop upon the threshold; we cannot traffic; there may be a game of hazard which he and I consent to play; but there is an end of all trading. If this be true, then the condition of a regular and lawful contract is, that there be no secrets in it; no secrets, either in the kind or quality of the merchandise, or in the breast, or in the pocket of the dealer. Let them all be swept away; let them be swept out, all secrets from all hiding-places, from all coverts of subterfuge and chicanery; and this, at least, I am certain of, that business would occasion fewer wounds of conscience to all honourable and virtuous communities.

APPENDIX TO THE FOREGOING DISCOURSE.

Some remarks upon the foregoing discourse, which had reached the author's ear during the weekly interval before the delivery of the next discourse, lead him, before entering upon it, to offer the following observations.

It may be thought that, in my discourse of the last Sunday evening, I have leaned to a view of the principles of trade which is too indulgent to its questionable practices. I am most anxious to guard against such an inference; and yet I must hesitate to yield exactly to the tone of objection which may possibly be adopted by some of my hearers. The pulpit is not to speak any peculiar language on this subject, because it is the pulpit. The language of truth is what we seek, the language which would be true anywhere. Neither is the pulpit to be looked upon as a post of duty, which is to serve only the purpose of assault, whose business it is to assail any particular class of persons, merchants, or others; nor is the church a proper place for men to come to, in order to enjoy the gratification of seeing other men attacked. Nor is it the only business of the moral teacher to denounce the sins of a violated conscience; it is sometimes quite as important to defend weak consciences. Nothing can be worse for a man than to act upon a principle of which he doubts the correctness. He is then doing wrong, even when the *thing* he does may be right. His conscience becomes weakened by wounds without cause; it is floating on a sea of doubt, and may be borne far beyond the bounds of rectitude. It is thus that there arises in a community a general and pernicious habit of paltering with conscience; of talking about certain principles as very good in theory, but as impracticable in fact; of slurring over the Christian rule with inuendoes; of commending it, indeed, and in a sort—but how? Why, of treacherously commending it, with those ironical praises, and ambiguous hints, and knowing glances of eye, which more effectually than anything else break down all principle.

On the contrary, let us come out fairly, and establish the true doctrine on independent grounds, with fair reasoning, without any bias against men of business, or for them, and then shall we stand upon the stable basis of conscience and principle, and be able to define its boundaries. If it be expedient and inevitable that men should, in business as in everything else, act, to a certain extent, upon their own superior sagacity, power, and information, let us plainly say so; and then let us faithfully warn them against going too far. Now, nobody doubts, I presume, that they may go too far; that the man of sagacity may overreach an idiot; that the monopolist and the usurer may abuse his power; and that he who possesses superior information may dishonestly and cruelly use it. And, therefore, it was less necessary to insist upon these points, than it was to discuss the great question, and the only question, viz. whether these advantages may be used at all. If they may not be used at all, then all commerce, in its actual, and, I think, inevitable procedures, is a system of knavery. If it is not a system of knavery, then it is important to defend it from that charge. And it is the more important, because, against merchants, from their acquiring greater wealth probably, there are peculiar prejudices in the community. The manufacturer may use his superior information, his particular invention, that is, he may get a patent for it, *i. e.* a monopoly, and every other profession may do substantially the same thing, and not a word is said against it. But if the merchant does this, he is called into serious question; and, influenced by this general distrust, he calls himself in question too. But unfortunately for him, instead of thinking deeply upon the matter, and settling himself upon some foundation of general principle, he is liable to give himself up to the suggestions of temporary expediency. He is not quite satisfied, perhaps, with what he is doing, and yet, he says, that he must do it, or he cannot get along—a way of reasoning that I hold to be most injurious to his character. Let him then, I say, settle some just principle, and conscientiously act upon it.

They are general principles, I must desire you to observe, which I have attempted to establish. The questions that arise upon the application of these principles, are, of course, numerous and complicated. I could not enter into

them. My inexperience disqualified me; and besides, it was impossible to meet the questions of every man's mind. But, by way of guarding against any false inferences from what I have said, let me offer two suggestions. In the first place, I have not intended to touch any questions about corporations, or about combinations and conspiracies to defraud. My discussion has been occupied with simple and single-handed dealings of man with man. In the next place, if my views have seemed to any one to lean to an unjust decision of any case, then I say, that they are to be limited and restrained by that very case. The very principle I adopt, is that of restricting the fair action of trade within the boundaries of justice and philanthropy.

I must add, in fine, that in defending the right in trade, the impression upon the popular ear may, naturally enough, have been, that I have not sufficiently considered the wrong. The wrong, let me observe here, will properly come under our consideration in another place. What I say now is, that if the principles I have laid down, have seemed to any one to verge towards an undue licence, I must most earnestly protest against his inference. That very licence, I say, is the point to which the principle shall not go. And I say more explicitly, that although the vender of any goods is not bound to assist the buyer with his judgment, yet that he is bound to point out any latent defect, and he is bound, by the general trust reposed in him on that point, to sell at the market price; and again, that monopoly, whether of money or other commodities, although it must inevitably raise the prices, although it must be governed in all ordinary cases by the market value, yet when it can control the market price, is bound to use its power with moderation; and finally, that he who acts upon superior information, though he may lawfully do so, shall not press his advantage to the extent of any fraudulent use, or to the infliction of any gross and undeserved injury; that he shall not press it farther than is necessary, reasonably to reward vigilance and admonish indolence; that he shall not press it farther than the wholesome action of trade, and the true welfare of the whole community requires.

ON THE MORAL END OF BUSINESS.

PROVERBS xx. 15: "There is gold and a multitude of rubies, but the lips of knowledge (*i. e.* of rectitude) is a precious jewel."

My subject this evening is the moral end of business. Let me first attempt to define my meaning in the use of this phrase—the moral end of business.

It is not the end for which property should be sought. It is not the moral purpose to be answered by the acquisition, but by the process of acquisition. And again, it is not the end of industry in general—that is a more comprehensive subject, but it is the end of business in particular, of barter, of commerce. "The end of business!" some one may say; "why, the end of business is to obtain property; the end of the process of acquisition is acquisition." If I addressed any person whose mind had not gone behind that ready and obvious answer to ultimate and deeper reasons, I should venture to say, that a revelation is to be made to him of a more exalted aim in business, of a higher, and, at the same time, more perilous scene of action in its pursuits, than he has yet imagined. In other words, I hold that the ultimate end of all business is a moral end. I believe that business—I mean not labour, but barter, traffic—would never have existed, if there had been no end but sustenance. The animal races obtain subsistence upon an easier and simpler plan; but for man there is a higher end, and that is moral.

The broad grounds of this position I find in the obvious designs of Providence, and in the evident adaptation to this moral end, of business itself.

There is, then, a design for which all things were made and ordained, going beyond the things themselves. To say that things were made, or that the arrangements and relations of things were ordained, for their own sake, is a proposition without meaning. The world, its structure, productions, laws, and events, have no good nor evil in them —none, but as they produce these results in the experience of living creatures. The end, then, of the inanimate creation is the welfare of the living, and, therefore, especially of the intelligent creation. But the welfare of human beings lies essentially in their moral culture. All is wrong, everywhere, if all is not right there. All of design that there is in this lower creation, presses upon that point. The universe is a moral chaos without that design, and it is a moral desolation to every mind in which that design is not accomplished. Life, then, has an ultimate purpose. We are not appointed to pass through this life barely that we may live. We are not impelled, both by disposition and necessity, to buy and sell, barely that we may do it; nor to get gain, barely that we may get it. There is an end in business beyond

supply. There is an object in the acquisition of wealth beyond success. There is a final cause of human traffic, and that is virtue.

With this view of the moral end of business, falls in the constant doctrine of all elevated philosophy and true religion. Life, say the expounders of every creed, is a probation. The circumstances in which we are placed; the events, the scenes of our mortal lot; the bright visions that cheer us, the dark clouds that overshadow us—all these are not an idle show, nor do they exist for themselves alone, nor because they must exist by the fiat of some blind chance; but they have a purpose; and that purpose is expressed in the word probation. Now, if anything deserves to be considered as a part of that probation, it is business. Life, say the wise, is a school. In this school there are lessons: toil is a lesson; trial is a lesson; and business, too, is a lesson. But the end of a lesson is, that something be learned; and the end of business is, that truth, rectitude, virtue, be learned. This is the ultimate design proposed by Heaven, and it is a design which every wise man, engaged in that calling, will propose to himself. It is no extravagance, therefore, but the simple assertion of a truth, to say to a man so engaged, and to say emphatically, "You have an end to gain beyond success, and that is the moral rectitude of your own mind."

That business is so exquisitely adapted to accomplish that purpose, is another argument with me to prove that such is the intention of its Ordainer, was its design. I can conceive that things might have been ordered otherwise; that human beings might have been formed for industry, and not for traffic. I can conceive man and nature to have been so constituted, that each individual should, by solitary labour, have drawn from the earth his sustenance; and that a vesture, softer, richer, and more graceful than is ever wrought in the looms of our manufactories, might have been woven upon his body, by the same invisible hands that have thus clothed the beasts of the desert, and the birds of the air, and the lilies of the field, so that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them. Then might man have held only the sweet counsel of society with his fellow, and never have been called to engage with him in the strife of business. Then, too, would he have been saved from all the dangers and vices of human traffic; but then, too, would the lofty virtues cultivated in this sphere of life, never have had an existence. For business, I repeat, is admirably adapted to form such virtues. It is apt, I know it is said, to corrupt men; but the truth is, it corrupts only those who are willing to be corrupted. An honest man, a man who sincerely desires to attain to a lofty and unbending uprightness, could scarcely seek a discipline more perfectly fitted to that end, than the discipline of trade. For what is trade? It is the constant adjustment of the claims of different parties, a man's self being one of the parties. This competition of rights and interests might not invade the solitary study, or the separate tasks of the workshop, or the labours of the silent field, once a day; but it presses upon the merchant and trader continually. Do you say that it presses too hard? Then, I reply, must the sense of rectitude be made the stronger to meet the trial. Every plea of this nature is an argument for strenuous moral effort. Shall I be told that the questions which often arise are very perplexing; that the case to be decided comes, oftentimes, not under a definite rule, but under a

general principle, whose very generality is perilous to the conscience? It is indeed. Here, perhaps, lies the great peril of business, in the generality of the rule. For conscience does not in most cases definitely say, "Thou shalt do this thing, and thou shalt do that." It says always, "Thou shalt do right," but what that is, is not always clear. And hence it is, that a man may take care to offend against no definite remonstrance of conscience, and that he may be, in the common acceptation, an honest man; and yet, that he may be a selfish, exacting, and oppressive man; a man who can never recognise the rights and interests of others; who can never see anything but on the side that is favourable to himself; who drowns the voice of his modest neighbour, with always and loudly saying, "Oh! this is right," and "that can't be"—a man, in fine, who, although he seldom, perhaps never, offends against any assignable or definite precept of conscience, has swerved altogether from all uprightness and generosity. What then is to be done? A work, I answer, of the most ennobling character. A man must do more than to attain to punctilious honesty in his actions; he must train his whole soul, his judgment, his sentiments, and affections, to uprightness, candour, and good will.

In fine, I look upon business as one vast scene of moral action. "The thousand wheels of commerce, with all their swift and complicated revolutions, I regard as an immense moral machinery. Meanness and cunning may lurk amidst it, but it was not designed for that degradation. That must be a noble scene of action, where conscience is felt to be a law. And it is felt to be the law of business; its very violations prove it such. It is the enthroned sovereign of the plan; disobedience, disloyalty, give attestation to it. Nothing is too holy to connect with it. There is a temple in one of the cities of Europe, through which is the very passage to the market-place; and those who pass there often rest their burthens to turn aside and kneel at the altar of prayer. So were it meet that all men should enter upon their daily business. The temple of mammon should be the temple of God. The gates of trade should be as the entrance to the sanctuary of conscience. There is an eye of witnessing and searching scrutiny fixed upon every one of its doings. The presence of that all-seeing One, not confined, as some imagine, to the silent church or the solitary grove—the presence of God, I think it not too solemn to say, is in every counting-room and warehouse of yonder mart, and ought to make it holy ground.

I have thus attempted to show that business has an ultimate, moral end—one going beyond the accumulation of property.

This may also be shown to be true, not only on the scale of our private affairs, but on the great theatre of history. Commerce has always been an instrument in the hands of Providence, for accomplishing nobler ends than promoting the wealth of nations. It has been the grand civilizer of nations. It has been the active principle in all civilization; or, to speak more accurately, it has presented that condition of things in which civilization has always rapidly advanced, and without which, it never has. The principles of civilization, properly speaking, are the principles of humanity—the natural desire of knowledge, liberty, and refinement. But commerce seems to have been the germ, the original spring, that has put all other springs in action. Liberty has always followed its steps; and with liberty,

science and religion have gradually advanced and improved, and never without it. All those kingdoms of central Asia, and of Europe too, which commerce has never penetrated, have been, and are, despotisms. With its earliest birth on the Mediterranean shore, freedom was born. Phœnicia, the merchants of whose cities, Tyre and Sidon, were accounted princes; the Hebrew commonwealth, which carried on a trade through those parts; the Grecian, Carthaginian, and Roman States, were not only the freest, but they were the only free states of antiquity. In the middle ages commerce broke down, in Europe, the feudal system, raising up, in the Hanse Towns, throughout Germany, Sweden, and Norway, a body of men who were able to cope with barons and kings, and to wrest from them their free charters and rightful privileges. In England, its influence is proverbial; the sheet-anchor, it has long been considered, of her unequalled prosperity and intelligence. On our own happy shores it has a still more unobstructed field, and is destined, I trust, to spread over the whole breadth of our interior domain, wealth, cultivation, and refinement.

Its moral influences are the only ones of which we stand in any doubt, and these, it need not be said, are of unequalled importance. The philanthropist, the Christian, the Christian preacher, are all bound to watch these influences with the closest attention, and to do all in their power to guard and elevate them. To this work I am attempting to contribute my humble part; and I conceive that I have now come to the grand principle of safety and improvement, viz. that trade is essentially a moral business; that it has a moral end more important than success; that the attainment of this end is better than the acquisition of wealth, and that the failure of it is worse than any commercial failure—worse than bankruptcy, poverty, ruin.

It is upon this point that I wish especially to insist; but there are one or two topics that may previously claim some attention.

If, then, business is a moral dispensation, and its highest end is moral, I shall venture to call in question the commonly supposed desirableness of escaping from it—the idea which prevails with so many of making a fortune in a few years, and afterwards of retiring to a state of leisure. If business really is a scene of worthy employment and of high moral action, I do not see why the moderate pursuit of it should not be laid down in the plan of entire active life; and why, upon this plan, a man should not determine to give only so much time each day to his avocations as would be compatible with such a plan; only so much time, in other words, as will be compatible with the daily enjoyment of life, with reading, society, domestic intercourse, and all the duties of philanthropy and devotion. If the merchant does not dislike or despise his employment—and it is when he makes himself the mere slave of business that he creates the greatest real objections to it—if, I say, he looks upon his employment as lawful and laudable, an appointment of God to accomplish good purposes in this world, and better for the next; why should he not, like the physician, the lawyer, and clergyman, like the husbandman and artisan, continue in it, through the period of active life, and adjust his views, expectations, and engagements, to that reasonable plan? But now, instead of this, what do we see around us? Why, men are engaging in business—here, at home, in their own country, in the bosom of their families, and amidst their friends—as if

they were in a foreign and infectious clime; and must be in haste to make their fortunes, that they may escape with their lives to some place of safety, ease, and enjoyment!

And now, what sort of preparation for retirement is this life, absorbed in business? It is precisely that sort of preparation that unfits a man for retirement. Nothing will work well or agreeably in experience, which has not some foundation in previous habits and practice. But for all those things which are to be a man's resources in retirement, his previous life, perhaps, has given him not a moment of time. He has really no rural tastes; for he has scarcely seen the country for years, except on hurried journeys of business; the busy wheels of commerce now, alas! roll through the year, and he is chained to them every month. He has made no acquaintance with the fine arts; no music has there been for his ear but the clink of gold; no pictures for his eye but fine coloured drawings of houses and lots, or of fancy villages and towns. He has cultivated no habits of reading; and—what I hold to be just as fatal to the happiness of any life, retired or active—he has cultivated no habits of devotion. Add to all this, that he is thrown upon the dangerous state of luxurious leisure—that prepared, enriched, productive hot-bed of prurient imaginations and teeming passions—without any guards against its moral perils. And what is likely to be the consequence? He will become perhaps an indolent and bloated sensualist, cumbering the beautiful grounds on which he vegetates rather than lives; or, from the violent change of his habits, you will soon hear, perhaps, that without any other cause than the change, he is dead; or he may live on, in weariness and ennui, wishing in his heart that he were back again, though it were to take his place behind the counter of the humblest shop.

I do not pretend, of course, that I am portraying the case of every man, who is proposing to retire from business. There *are* those, doubtless, whose views of retiring are reasonable and praiseworthy; who do not propose to escape from all employment; who are living religiously and virtuously *in the midst* of their business, and not unwisely intending to make up for the deficiency of those qualities in retirement; who wish to improve and beautify some pleasant rural-abode, and thus, and in many other ways, to be useful to the country around them. To such a retirement I have nothing to object: and I only venture to suggest, as an obvious dictate of good sense, that he who proposes, some day, to retire from business, should, in the meantime, cultivate those qualities and habits which will make him happy in retirement. But this I also say, that I do more than doubt, whether any man, who is completely engrossed in business, from morning till night, for twenty or thirty years, can be prepared to enjoy or improve a life of leisure.

Another topic, of which I wish to speak, is the rage for speculation. I wish to speak of it now in a particular view—as interfering, that is to say, with the moral end of business. And here, again, let me observe, that I can have nothing to do with instances, with exceptions. I can only speak of the general tendency of things. And it is not against *speculation simply*, that I have anything to allege. All business possesses more or less of this character. Everything is bought on the expectation of selling it for more. But this rage for speculation, this eagerness of many for sudden and stupendous accumulation, this spirit

of gambling in trade, is a different thing. It proceeds on principles entirely different from the maxims of a regular and pains-taking business. It is not looking to diligence and fidelity for a fair reward, but to change and chance for a fortunate turn. It is drawing away men's minds from the healthful processes of sober industry and attention to business, and leading them to wait in feverish excitement, as at the wheel of a lottery. The proper basis of success—vigilant care and labour—is forsaken for a system of baseless credit. Upon this system, men proceed, straining their means and stretching their responsibilities, till, in calm times, they can scarcely hold on upon their position; and when a sudden jar shakes the commercial world, or a sudden blast sweeps over it, many fall, like untimely fruit, from the towering tree of fancied prosperity. Upon this system, many imagine that they are doing well, when they are not doing well. They rush into expenses, which they cannot afford, upon the strength, not of their actual, but of their imaginary or expected means. Young men, who, in former days, would have been advised to walk a while longer, and patiently to tread the upward path, must buy horses and vehicles for their accommodation, and, mounted upon the car of fancied independence, they are hurried only to swifter destruction.

This system of rash and adventurous speculation overlooks all the moral uses and ends of business. To do business and get gain, honestly and conscientiously, is a good thing. It is a useful discipline of the character. I look upon a man who has acquired wealth, in a laudable, conscientious, and generous pursuit of business, not only with a respect far beyond what I can feel for his wealth—for which indeed, abstractly, I can feel none at all—but with the distinct feeling that he has acquired something far more valuable than opulence. But for this discipline of the character, for the reasonableness and rectitude of mind which a regular business intercourse may form, speculation furnishes but a narrow field, if any at all; such speculation, I mean, as has lately created a popular phrensy in this country about the sudden acquisition of property. The game which men were playing was too rapid, and the stake too large, to admit of the calm discriminations of conscience, and the reasonable contemplation of moral ends. Wealth came to be looked upon as the only end; and immediate wealth was the agitating prize. Men could not wait for the slow and disciplinary methods, by which Providence designed that they should acquire it; but they felt as if it were the order of Providence, that fortunes should fall direct from heaven into their open hands. Rather should we not say, that multitudes did not look to heaven at all, but to speculation itself instead, as if it were a god, or some wonder-working magician at least, that was suddenly to endow them with opulence. Acquisition became the story of an Arabian tale; and men's minds were filled with romantic schemes, and visionary hopes, and vain longings, rather than with sobriety, and candour, and moderation, and gratitude, and trust in Heaven.

This insane and insatiable passion for accumulation, ever ready, when circumstances favour, to seize upon the public mind, is that "love of money which is the root of all evil," that "covetousness which is idolatry." It springs from an undue, an idolatrous estimate of the value of property. Many are feeling, that nothing—nothing will do for

them or for their children, but wealth; not a good character, not well-trained and well-exerted faculties, not virtue, not the hope of heaven—nothing but wealth. It is their god, and the god of their families. Their sons are growing up to the same worship of it, and to an equally baneful reliance upon it for the future; they are rushing into expenses which the divided property of their father's house will not enable them to sustain; and they are preparing to be, in turn and from necessity, slaves to the same idol. How truly is it written, that "they that *will* be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition!" There is no need that they should be rich; but they *will* be rich. All the noblest functions of life may be discharged without wealth, all its highest honours obtained, all its purest pleasures enjoyed; yet I repeat it—nothing, nothing will do but wealth. Disappoint a man of this, and he mourns as if the highest end of life were defeated. Strip him of this; and, this gone, all is gone. Strip him of this, and I shall point to no unheard of experience, when I say—he had rather die than live!

The grievous mistake, the mournful evil implied in this oversight of the great spiritual end, which should be sought in all earthly pursuits, is the subject to which I wished to draw your attention in the last place. It is not merely in the haste to be rich, accompanied with the intention to retire from business to a state of luxurious and self indulgent leisure; it is not merely in the rage for speculation, that the evils of overlooking the moral aim of business are seen; but they sink deep into the heart, in the ordinary walks of regular and daily occupation; dethroning the spiritual nature from its proper place, vitiating the affections, and losing some of the noblest opportunities for virtue that can be lost on earth.

The spiritual nature, I say, is dethroned from its proper place, by this substitution of the immediate end, wealth, for the ultimate end, virtue. Who is this being that labours for nothing but property, with no thought beyond it; with the feeling that nothing will do without it; with the feeling that there are no ends in life that can satisfy him, if that end is not gained? You will not tell me that it is a being of my own fancy. You have probably known such; perhaps some of you are such. I have known men of this way of thinking, and men, too, of sense and of amiable temper. Who, then, I ask again, is this being? He is an immortal being; and his views ought to stretch themselves to eternity—ought to seek an ever-expanding good. And this being, so immortal in his nature, so infinite in faculties—to what is he looking? To the sublime mountain range that spreads along the horizon of this world? To the glorious host of glittering stars, the majestic train of night, the infinite regions of heaven? No—his is no upward gaze, no wide vision of the world—to a speck of earthly dust he is looking. He might lift his eye, a philosophic eye, to the magnificence of the universe, for an object; and upon what is it fixed? Upon the mole-hill beneath his feet! That is his end. Everything is nought, if that is gone. He is an immortal being, I repeat; he may be enrobed in that vesture of light, of virtue, which never shall decay; and he is to live through such ages, that the time shall come, when to his eye all the splendours of fortune, of gilded palace and gorgeous equipage, shall be no more than the spangle that falls from a royal robe; and yet, in that

glittering particle of earthly dust, is his soul absorbed and bound up. I am not saying, now, that he is willing to lose his soul for that. This he may do. But I only say now, that he sets his soul upon that, and feels it to be an end so dear, that the irretrievable loss of it, the doom of poverty, is death to him; nay, to his sober and deliberate judgment —for I have known such instances—is worse than death itself! And yet he is an immortal being, I repeat, and he is sent into this world on an errand. What errand? What is the great mission on which the Master of life hath sent him here? To get riches? To amass gold coins, and bank notes? To scrape together a little of the dust of this earth, and then to lie down upon it and embrace it, in the indolence of enjoyment, or in the rapture of possession? Is such worldliness possible? Worldliness! Why, it is not worldliness. That should be the quality of being attached to a world—to all that it can give, and not to one thing only that it can give—to fame, to power, to moral power, to influence, to the admiration of the world. Worldliness, methinks, should be something greater than men make it—should stretch itself out to the breadth of the great globe, and not wind itself up like a worm in the web of selfish possession. If I must be worldly, let me have the worldliness of Alexander, and not of Crœsus. And wealth too—I had thought it was a means and not an end—an instrument which a noble human being handles, and not a heap of shining dust in which he buries himself; something that a man could drop from his hand, and still be a man—be all that ever he was—and compass all the noble ends that pertain to a human being. What if you be poor? Are you not still a man—oh! heaven, and mayest be a spirit, and have an universe of spiritual possessions for your treasure. What if you be poor? You may still walk through the world in freedom and in joy; you may still tread the glorious path of virtue; you may still win the bright prize of immortality; you may still achieve purposes on earth that constitute all the glory of earth, and ends in heaven, that constitute all the glory of heaven. Nay, if such must be the effect of wealth, I would say, let me be poor. I would pray God that I might be poor. Rather, and more wisely ought I, perhaps, to say with Agur, "Give me neither poverty nor riches; lest I be full and deny thee, and say, who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

The many corrupting and soul-destroying vices engendered in the mind by this lamentable oversight of the spiritual aim in business, deserve a separate and solemn consideration.

I believe that you will not accuse me of any disposition to press unreasonable charges against men of business. I cannot possibly let the pulpit throw burthens of responsibility or warnings of danger on this sphere of life, as if others were not in their measure open to similar admonitions. I come not here to make war upon any particular class. I pray you not to regard this pulpit as holding any relation to you but that of a faithful and Christian friend, or as having any interest in the world connected with business, but your own true interest. Above all things do I deprecate that worldly and most pernicious habit of hearing and approving very good things in the pulpit, and going away and calmly doing very bad things in the world, as if the two had no real connexion—that habit of listening to the admonitions and rebukes of

the pulpit with a sort of demure respect, or with significant glances at your neighbours, and then of going away, commending the doctrine with your lips to violate it in your lives—as if you said, "well, the pulpit has acted its part, and now we will go and act ours." I act no part here. God forbid! I endeavour to be reasonable and just in what I say here. I take no liberty to be extravagant in this place, because I cannot be answered. I hold myself solemnly bound to say nothing recklessly and for effect. I occupy here no isolated position. I am continually thinking what my hearers will fairly have to say on their part, and striving fairly to meet it. I speak to you simply as one man may speak to another; as soul may speak to its brother soul; and I solemnly and affectionately say, what I would have you say to me in a change of place—I say that the pursuits of business are perilous to your virtue.

On this subject I cannot indeed speak with the language of experience. But I cannot forget that the voice of all moral instruction, in all ages and in all countries, is a voice of warning. I cannot forget that the voice of Holy Scripture falls in solemn accents upon the perils attending the pursuit of wealth. How solemn, how strong, how pertinent those accents are, I may not know, but I must not, for that reason, withhold them. "Wo unto you who are rich," saith the holy word, "for ye have not received your consolation. Wo unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger." Hunger?. What hath wealth to do with hunger! And yet there is a hunger. What is it? What can it be but the hungering of the soul; and that is the point which, in this discourse, I press upon your attention. And again it says, "Your riches are corrupted, your gold and silver is cankered;" and is it not cankered in the very hearts of those whom wealth has made proud, vain, anxious, and jealous, or self-indulgent, sensual, diseased, and miserable? —"And the rust of them," so proceeds the holy text, "shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire." Ah! the rust of riches!—not that portion of them which is kept bright in good and holy uses—"and the consuming fire" of the passions which wealth engenders! No rich man—I lay it down as an axiom of all experience —no rich man is safe, who is not a benevolent man. No rich man is safe, but in the imitation of that benevolent God, who is the possessor and dispenser of all the riches of the universe. What else mean the miseries of a selfishly luxurious and fashionable life everywhere? What mean the sighs that come up from the purlieus, and couches, and most secret haunts of all splendid and self-indulgent opulence? Do not tell me that other men are sufferers too. Say not that the poor, and destitute, and forlorn, are miserable also. Ah! just Heaven! thou hast, in thy mysterious wisdom, appointed to them a lot hard, full hard, to bear. Poor houseless wretches! who "eat the bitter bread of penury, and drink the baleful cup of misery;" the winter's wind blows keenly through your "looped and windowed raggedness;" your children wander about unshod, unclothed, and untended. I wonder not that you sigh. But why should those who are surrounded with everything that heart can wish, or imagination conceive—the very crumbs that fall from whose table of prosperity might feed hundreds—why should they sigh amidst their profusion and splendour? *They have broken the bond that should connect power with usefulness, and opulence with mercy.* That

is the reason They have taken up their treasures, and wandered away into a forbidden world of their own, far from the sympathies of suffering humanity: and the heavy night-dews are descending upon their splendid revels; and the all-gladdening light of heavenly beneficence is exchanged for the sickly glare of selfish enjoyment; and happiness, the blessed angel that hovers over generous deeds and heroic virtues, has fled away from that world of false gaiety and fashionable exclusion.

I have, perhaps, wandered a moment from the point before me—the peril of business—though as business is usually aiming at wealth, I may be considered rather as having only pressed that point to some of its ultimate bearings.

But the peril of business specifically considered; and I ask, if there is not good ground for the admonitions on this point, of every moral and holy teacher of every age? What means, if there is not, that eternal disingenuity of trade, that is ever putting on fair appearances and false pretences—of "the buyer that says, it is naught, it is naught, but when he is gone his way, then boasteth"—of the seller, who is always exhibiting the best samples, not fair but false samples, of what he has to sell; of the seller, I say, who, to use the language of another, "if he is tying up a bundle of quills, will place several in the centre of not half the value of the rest, and thus sends forth a hundred liars, with a fair outside, to proclaim as many falsehoods to the world?" These practices, alas! have fallen into the regular course of the business of many. All men expect them; and therefore you may say, that nobody is deceived. But deception is intended: else why are these things done? What if nobody is deceived? The seller himself is corrupted. He may stand acquitted of dishonesty in the moral code of worldly traffic; no man may charge him with dishonesty; and yet to himself he is a dishonest man. Did I say that nobody is deceived! Nay, but somebody is deceived. This man, the seller, is grossly, wofully deceived. He thinks to make a little profit by his contrivance; and he is selling, by pennyworths, the very integrity of his soul. Yes, the pettiest shop where these things are done, may be, to the spiritual vision, a place of more than tragic interest. It is the stage on which the great action of life is performed. There stands a man who, in the sharp collisions of daily traffic, might have polished his mind to the bright and beautiful image of truth, who might have put on the noble brow of candour, and cherished the very soul of uprightness. I have known such a man. I have looked into his humble shop. I have seen the mean and soiled articles with which he is dealing. And yet the process of things going on there was as beautiful, as if it had been done in heaven! But now, what is this man—the man who always turns up to you the better side of everything he sells — the man of unceasing contrivances and expedients, his life long, to make things appear better than they are? Be he the greatest merchant or the poorest huckster, he is a mean, a knavish—and were I not awed by the thoughts of his immortality, I should say—a contemptible creature, whom nobody can trust, whom nobody that knows him can love, whom nobody can reverence. Not one thing in the dusty repository of things, great or small, which he deals with, is so vile as he. What *is* this *thing* then, which is done, or may be done in the house of traffic? I tell you, though you may have thought not so of it—I tell you that *there*, even *there*, a soul may be

lost!—that that very structure, built for the gain of earth, may be the gate of hell! Say not that this fearful appellation should be applied to worse places than that. A man may as certainly corrupt all the integrity and virtue of his soul in a warehouse or a shop, as in a gambling-house or a brothel.

False to himself, then, may a man become, while he is walking through the perilous courses of traffic, false also to his *neighbour*. I cannot dwell much upon this topic; but I will put one question, not for reproach, but for your sober consideration, Must it not render a man extremely liable to be selfish, that he is engaged in pursuits whose immediate and palpable end is his own interest? I wish to draw your attention to this peculiarity of trade. I do not say, that the motives which originally induce a man to enter into this sphere of life, may not be as benevolent as those of any other man; but this is the point which I wish to have considered—that while the learned professions have knowledge for their immediate object, and the artist and the artisan have the perfection of their work as the thing that directly engages their attention, the merchant and trader have for their immediate object, profit. Does not this circumstance greatly expose a man to be selfish? Full well I know that many are not so; that many resist and overcome this influence; but I think, that it is to be resisted. And a wise man, who more deeply dreads the taint of inward selfishness than of outward dishonour, will take care to set up counter influences. And to this end he should beware how he clenches his hand and closes his heart against the calls of suffering, the dictates of public spirit, and the claims of beneficence. To listen to them is, perhaps, his very salvation!

But the vitiating process of business may not stop with selfishness; it is to be contemplated in still another and higher light. For how possible is it, that a man, while engaged in exchanging and diffusing the bounties of heaven, while all countries and climes are pouring their blessings at his feet, while he lawfully deals with not one instrument, in mind or matter, but it was formed and fitted to his use by a beneficent hand—how possible it is that he may forget and forsake the Being who has given him all things! How possible is it, that under the very accumulation of his blessings may be buried all his gratitude and piety—that he may be too busy to pray, too full to be thankful, too much engrossed with the gifts to think of the Giver! The humblest giver expects some thanks; he would think it a lack of ordinary human feeling in any one, to snatch at his bounties, without casting a look on the bestower; he would gaze in astonishment at such heedless ingratitude and rapacity, and almost doubt whether the creatures he helped could be human. Are they any more human—do they any more deserve the name of men, when the object of such perverse and senseless ingratitude is the Infinite Benefactor? Would we know what aspect it bears before his eye? Once, and more than once, hath that Infinite Benefactor spoken. I listen, and tremble as I listen, to that lofty adjuration with which the sublime prophet hath set forth *His* contemplation of the ingratitude of his creatures. "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! for the Lord hath spoken; I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not

know; my people doth not consider." Sad and grievous error even in the eye of reason! Great default even to nature's religion! But art thou a Christian man—what law shall acquit thee, if that heavy charge lies at thy door—at the door of thy warehouse—at the door of thy dwelling? Beware, lest thou forget God in his mercies! the Giver in his gifts! lest the light be gone from thy prosperity, and prayer from thy heart, and the love of thy neighbour from the labours of thy calling, and the hope of heaven from the abundance of thine earthly estate!

But not with words of warning—ever painful to use, and not always profitable—would I now dismiss you from the house of God. I would not close this discourse, in which I may seem to have pressed heavily on the evils to which business exposes those who are engaged in it, without holding up distinctly to view, the great moral aim on which it is my main purpose to insist, and attempting to show its excellence.

There is such a nobleness of character in the right course, that it is to that point I would last direct your attention. The aspirings of youth, the ambition of manhood, could receive no loftier moral direction than may be found in the sphere of business. The school of trade, with all its dangers, may be made one of the noblest schools of virtue in the world; and it is of some importance to say it:—because those who regard it as a sphere only of selfish interests and sordid calculations, are certain to win no lofty moral prizes in that school. There can be nothing more fatal to elevation of character in any sphere, whether it be of business or society, than to speak habitually of that sphere as given over to low aims and pursuits. If business is constantly spoken of as contracting the mind and corrupting the heart; if the pursuit of property is universally satirized as selfish and grasping; too many who engage in it will think of nothing but of adopting the character and the course so pointed out. Many causes have contributed, without doubt, to establish that disparaging estimate of business—the spirit of feudal aristocracies, the pride of learning, the tone of literature, and the faults of business itself.

I say, therefore, that there is no being in the world for whom I feel a higher moral respect and admiration, than for the upright man of business; no, not for the philanthropist, the missionary, or the martyr. I feel that I could more easily be a martyr, than a man of that lofty moral uprightness. And let me say yet more distinctly, that it is not for the generous man that I feel this kind of respect—that seems to me a lower quality, a mere impulse, compared with the lofty virtue I speak of. It is not for the man who distributes extensive charities, who bestows magnificent donations. That may be all very well—I speak not to disparage it—I wish there were more of it; and yet it may all consist with a want of the true, lofty, unbending uprightness. That is not the man, then, of whom I speak; but it is he who stands amidst all the swaying interests and perilous exigencies of trade, firm, calm, disinterested, and upright. It is the man, who can see another man's interests, just as clearly as his own. It is the man, whose mind his own advantage does not blind nor cloud for an instant; who could sit a judge upon a question between himself and his neighbour, just as safely as the purest magistrate upon the bench of justice. Ah! how much richer than ermine, how far nobler than the train of magisterial authority, how more awful than the guarded bench of majesty, is that

simple, magnanimous, and majestic truth! Yes, it is the man who is true—true to himself, to his neighbour, and to his God—true to the right—true to his conscience—and who feels that the slightest suggestion of that conscience, is more to him than the chance of acquiring a hundred estates.

Do I not speak to some such one now? Stands there not here, some man of such glorious virtue, of such fidelity to truth and to God? Good friend! I call upon you to hold fast to that integrity, as the dearest treasure of existence. Though storms of commercial distress sweep over you, and the wreck of all worldly hopes threaten you, hold on to that as the plank that shall bear your soul unhurt to its haven. Remember that which thy Saviour hath spoken—"what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Remember that there is a worse bankruptcy than that which is recorded in an earthly court—the bankruptcy that is recorded in heaven—bankruptcy in thy soul—all poor, and broken down, and desolate there—all shame and sorrow and mourning, instead of that glorious integrity, which should have shone, like an angel's presence, in the darkest prison that ever spread its shadow over human calamity. Heaven and earth may pass away, but the word of Christ—the word of thy truth, let it pass from thee never!

ON THE USES OF LABOUR, AND THE PASSION FOR A FORTUNE.

2 THESSALONIANS iii. 10: "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any man would not work, neither should he eat."

I WISH to invite your attention this evening to the uses of labour, and the passion for a fortune. The topics, it is obvious, are closely connected. The latter, indeed, is my main subject; but as preliminary to it, I wish to set forth, as I regard it, the great law of human industry. It is worthy, I think, of being considered, and religiously considered, as the chief law of all human improvement and happiness. And if there be any attempt to escape from this law, or if there be any tendency of the public mind, at any time, to the same point, the eye of the moral observer should be instantly drawn to that point, as one most vital to the public welfare. That there has been such a tendency of the public mind in this country, that it has been most signally manifest within a few years past, and that although it has found in cities the principle field of its manifestation, it has spread itself over the country too; that multitudes have become suddenly possessed with a new idea, the idea of making a fortune in a brief time, and then of retiring to a state of ease and independence—this is the main fact on which I shall insist, and of which I shall endeavour to point out the dangerous consequences.

But let me first call your attention to the law which has thus, as I contend, in spirit at least, been broken. What then is the law? It is, that industry—working, either with the hand or with the mind—the application of the powers to some task, to the achievement of some result, lies at the foundation of all human improvement.

Every step of our progress from infancy to manhood, is proof of this. The process of education, rightly considered, is nothing else but wakening the powers to activity. It is through their own activity alone that they are cultivated. It is not by the mere imposition of tasks, or requisition of lessons. The very purpose of the tasks and lessons is to awaken, and direct that activity. Knowledge itself cannot be gained, but upon this condition, and if it could be gained, would be useless without it.

The state into which the being is introduced is, from the first step of it to the last, designed to answer the purpose of such an education. Nature's education, in other words, answers in this respect to the just idea of man's. Each sense, in succession, is elicited by surrounding objects, and it is only by repeated trials and efforts that it is brought to perfection. In like manner does the scene of life appeal to every intellectual and every moral power. Life is a severe discipline, and

demands every energy of human nature to meet it. Nature is a rigorous taskmaster, and its language to the human race is, "if a man will not work, neither shall he eat." We are not sent into the world like animals, to crop the spontaneous herbage of the field, and then to lie down in indolent repose: but we are sent to dig the soil and plough the sea; to do the business of cities and the work of manufactories. The raw material only is given us, and by the processes of cookery and the fabrications of art, it is to be wrought to our purpose. The human frame itself is a most exquisite piece of mechanism, and it is designed in every part for work: the strength of the arm, the dexterity of the hand, and the delicacy of the finger, are all fitted for the accomplishment of this purpose.

All this is evidently not a matter of chance, but the result of design. The world is the great and appointed school of industry. In an artificial state of society, I know mankind are divided into the idle and the labouring classes; but such, I maintain, was not the design of Providence. On the contrary, it was meant that all men, in one way or another, should work. If any human being could be completely released from this law of Providence, if he should never be obliged so much as to stretch out his hand for anything, if everything came to him at a bare wish, if there were a slave appointed to minister to every sense, and the powers of nature were made, in like manner, to obey every thought, he would be a mere mass of inertness, uselessness, and misery.

Yes, such is man's task, and such is the world he is placed in. The world of matter is shapeless and void to all man's purposes, till he lays upon it the creative hand of labour. And so also is the world of mind. It is as true in mind as it is in matter, that the materials only are given us. Absolute truth, ready made, no more presents itself to us in one department, than finished models of mechanism ready made do in the other. Original principles there doubtless are in both; but the result—philosophy, that is to say—in the one case, is as far to seek, as art and mechanism are in the other.

Such, I repeat, is the world, and such is man. The earth he stands upon and the air he breathes are, so far as his improvement is concerned, but elements to be wrought by him to certain purposes. If he stood on earth passively and unconsciously, imbibing the dew and sap, and spreading his arms to the light and air, he would be but a tree. If he grew up capable neither of purpose nor of improvement, with no guidance but instinct, and no powers but those of digestion and locomotion, he would be but an animal. But he is more than this; he is a man; he is made to improve; he is made, therefore, to think, to act, to *work*. Labour is his great function, his peculiar distinction, his privilege. *Can* he not think so? Can he not see, that from being an animal to eat and drink and sleep, to become a worker—to put forth the hand of ingenuity, and to pour his own thought into the worlds of nature, fashioning them into forms of grace and fabrics of convenience, and converting them to purposes of improvement and happiness—can he not see, I repeat, that this is the greatest possible step in privilege? Labour, I say, is man's great function. The earth and the atmosphere are his laboratory. With spade and plough, with mining-shafts and furnaces and forges, with fire and steam—amidst the noise and whirl

of swift and bright machinery, and abroad in the silent fields beneath the roofing sky, man was made to be ever working, ever experimenting. And while he, and all his dwellings of care and toil, are borne onward with the circling skies, and the shows of heaven are around him, and their infinite depths image and invite his thought, still in all the worlds of philosophy, in the universe of intellect, man must be a worker. He is nothing, he can be nothing, he can achieve nothing, fulfil nothing, without working. Not only can he gain no lofty improvement without this; but without it, he can gain no tolerable happiness. So that he who gives himself up to utter indolence, finds it too hard for him; and is obliged in self-defence, unless he be an idiot, to *do* something. The miserable victims of idleness and *ennui*, driven at last from their chosen resort, are compelled to work, to do something; yes, to employ their wretched and worthless lives in—"*killing time.*" They must hunt down the hours as their prey. Yes, time—that mere abstraction—that sinks light as the air upon the eyelids of the busy and the weary, to the idle is an enemy clothed with gigantic armour; and they must kill it, or themselves die. They cannot *live* in mere idleness; and all the difference between them and others is, that they employ their activity to no useful end. They find, indeed, that the hardest work in the world is to do nothing!

This reference to the class of mere idlers, as it is called, leads me to offer one specification in laying down this law concerning industry. Suppose a man, then, to possess an immense, a boundless fortune, and that he holds himself discharged, in consequence, from all the ordinary cares and labours of life. Now, I maintain that, in order to be either an improving, worthy, or happy man, he must do one of two things. He must either devote himself to the accomplishment of some public objects, or he must devote some hours of every day to his own intellectual cultivation. In any case, he must be, to a certain extent, a laborious man. The thought of his heart may be far different from this. He may think it his special privilege, as a man of fortune, to be exempt from all care and effort. To lounge on soft couches, to walk in pleasant gardens, to ride out for exercise, and to come home for feasting—this may be his plan. But it will never do. It never did yet answer for any human being, and it never will. God has made a law against it, which no human power ever could annul, nor human ingenuity evade. That law is, that upon labour, either of the body or of the mind, all essential well-being shall depend. And if this law be not complied with, I verily believe that wealth is only a curse, and luxury only a more slippery road to destruction. The poor idler, I verily believe, is safer than the rich idler: and I doubt whether he is not happier. I doubt whether the most miserable vagrancy, that sleeps in barns and sheds, and feeds upon the fragments of other men's tables, and leaves its tattered garments upon every hedge, is *so* miserable as surfeited opulence, sighing in palaces, sunk in the lethargy of indolence, loaded with plethory, groaning with weariness which no wholesome fatigue ever comes to relieve. The vagrant is, at least, obliged to *walk* from place to place, and thus far has the advantage over his fellow idler who can ride. Yes, he walks abroad in the fair morning—no soft couch detains him—he walks abroad among the fresh fields, by the sunny hedges and along the silent lanes, singing his idle

song as he goes—a creature poor and wretched enough, no doubt; but I am tempted to say, if I must be idle, give me that lot, rather than to sit in the cheerless shadow of palace roofs, or to toss on downy beds of sluggish stupor or racking pain.

I have thus endeavoured to state one of the cardinal and inflexible laws of all human improvement and happiness. I have already premised, that my purpose in doing so, was to speak of the spirit of gain, of the eagerness for a fortune, as characteristics of modern business, which tend to the dishonour and violation of the law of labour.

In proceeding to do this, let me more generally observe, in the first place, that there has always been a public opinion in the world, derogatory to labour. The necessity of exertion, though it is the very law under which God has placed mankind for their improvement and virtue, has always been regarded as a kind of degradation—has always been felt as a kind of reproach. With the exception of a few great geniuses, none so great as those who do nothing. Freedom from the necessity of exertion is looked upon as a privileged condition; it is encircled with admiring eyes; it absolutely gathers dignity and honour about it. One might think that a man would make some apologies for it, to the toiling world. Not at all; he is proud of it. It is for the busy man to make apologies. He hopes you will excuse him; he *must* work, or he *must* attend to his business. You would think he was about to do some mean action. You would think he was about to do something of which he is ashamed. And he *is* ashamed of it!

The time has hardly gone by, when even literary labour—labour of the mind, the noblest of all labour—has suffered under this disparaging estimate. Authorship has always been held to be the proper subject for the patronage of condition. Some of the most distinguished authors have lived in obscurity, compared with the rich and fashionable around them, and have only forced their way into posthumous celebrity. The rewards of intellectual toil have usually been stinted to the provision of a bare, humble subsistence. Not seldom has the reward been scarcely a remove from starvation. But when we descend to manual labour, the comparison is still more striking. The labouring classes, *operatives* as they are significantly called in these days, are generally regarded but as a useful machinery, to produce and manufacture comforts and luxuries for those that can buy them. And the labouring classes are so regarded, mainly, not because they are less informed and cultivated, though that may be true, but *because* they are the labouring classes. Let any one of them be suddenly endowed with a fortune, let him be made independent of labour, and, without any change of character, he immediately, in the general estimation, takes his place among what are called the upper classes. In those countries where the favouritism extended to the aristocracy has made many of its members the vainest, most frivolous, and useless of beings, it must be apparent, that many persons among the business classes are altogether their superiors in mind, in refinement, in all the noblest qualities; and yet does the bare circumstance of pecuniary independence carry it over everything. They walk abroad in lordly pride, and the children of toil on every side do homage to them. Let such a one enter any one of the villages of England or of this country, let him live there—with nothing to do, and doing nothing the year round—and those who labour in the field and

the workshop will look upon him, in bare virtue of his ability to be idle, as altogether their superior. Yes, those who have wrought well in the great school of providence, who have toiled faithfully at their tasks and learned them, will pay this mental deference to the truant, to the idler, to him who learns nothing and does nothing—ay, and because he does nothing. Nay, in that holy church, whose ministry is the strongest bond to philanthropic exertion, the clergy, the very ministry of him who went about doing good, and had not where to lay his head, sinks, in the estimation of the whole world, to the lowest point of depression, the moment it is called "a working clergy." That very epithet, *working*, seems, in spite of every counteracting consideration, to be a stigma upon everything to which it can be applied.

But besides this general opinion, there is a specific opinion, or way of thinking, to which I have already referred, as opposed to our principle, and to which I wish now to invite your more particular attention. This opinion, or way of thinking, I must endeavour to describe with some care, as it constitutes the basis of fact, from which the moral reflections of the remainder of this discourse will arise.

It will be admitted, then, in the general, I think, that modern business—*modern*, I mean, as compared with that of a hundred or even fifty years ago—has assumed a new character; that it has departed from the staidness, regularity, and moderation of former days. The times, when the business of the father descended to the son, and was expected to pass down as an heir-loom in the family; when the risks were small, and the gains were moderate, or if ample, still comparatively sure, seem to have given way to the intense desire and the hazardous pursuit of immediate and immense accumulation. It is not necessary to the statement I am making, that I should enter into the causes of this change. They are, doubtless, to be found in the unusual opportunities for gain, in the extraordinary extension of credits, and, I think also, in the rapid expansion of the principle of liberty; that is to say, in the intellectual activity, personal ambition, and unfettered enterprise, which that principle has introduced into society. But whatever be the causes of the change, it will not be denied, I presume, that there has sprung up, in connexion with it, a new view of acquisition; or, rather, to state more exactly what I mean, that a view of acquisition, which, in former time, was confined to a few minds, has now taken possession of almost the entire business community, and constitutes, therefore, beyond all former example, one of the great moral features of the times. I cannot, perhaps, briefly describe this view better, than by denominating it, a *passion for making a fortune*, and for making it speedily. I do not, of course, mean to say, that this *passion* has not existed before. The love of money has always been a desire so strong, that it has needed for its restraint, all the checks and admonitions of reason and religion. There have always been those, who have set their affections and expectations on a fortune, as something indispensable to their happiness. There have also appeared, from time to time, seasons of rash and raging speculation—as in the case of the South Sea and Mississippi stocks in England—disturbing, however, but occasionally, the regular progress of business. But the case with us now is different. We have, at length, become conversant with times, in which these seasons of excess and hazard in business are succeeding one another

periodically, and with but brief intervals. The pursuit of property, and that in no moderate amount, has acquired at once an unprecedented activity and universality. The views with which multitudes now are entering into business, are not of gaining a subsistence, they disdain the thought; not barely of pursuing a proper and useful calling, that is far beneath their ambition; but of acquiring a fortune, of acquiring ease and independence. In accordance with this view is the common notion of retiring from business. It is true, that we do not see much of this retiring, but we hear much about it. The passion exists, though the course of business is so rash as constantly to disappoint, or so eager as finally to overcome it.

In saying that a great change is passing over the business character of the world, and that it is in some respects dangerous, I do not intend to say, that it is altogether bad, or even that there is necessarily more evil than good in it. I hold it to be an advantage to the world, that restrictions, like those of the guilds of Germany, and the borough laws in England, are thrown off, and that a greater number of competitors can enter the lists, and run the race for the comforts and luxuries of life. The prizes, too, will be smaller as the competitors are more numerous; and that, I hold, will be an advantage. I believe, also, that the system of doing business on credit, in a young and enterprising country, is, within proper bounds, useful; and that our own owes a part of its unexampled growth and prosperity to this cause. I only say, what I think all will admit, that, from these causes, there are tendencies in the business of the country which are dangerous.

But to return to my statement. I undertake to say, not only in general, that there are wrong practical tendencies, but that there is a way of thinking about business which is wrong. Your practical advisers may tell you that there has been over-trading; that this is the great evil; and that it must be avoided in future. I do not say, for I do not know, whether this has been the great evil or not; but this I say, that it probably will not be avoided in future, if it has been the evil. And why not? Because there is an evil beneath the evil alleged; and that is, an excessive desire for property, an eagerness for fortune. In other words, there is a wrong way of thinking, which lies like a canker at the root of all wholesome moderation. The very idea, that property is to be acquired in the course of ten or twenty years, which shall suffice for the rest of life; that, by some prosperous traffic, or grand speculation, all the labour of life is to be accomplished in a brief portion of it; that, by dexterous management, a large part of the term of human existence is to be exonerated from the laws of industry and self-denial—all this way of thinking, I contend, is founded in a mistake of the true nature and design of business, and of the conditions of human well-being.

I do not say—still to discriminate—that it is wrong to desire wealth, and even, with a favourable and safe opportunity, to seek the rapid accumulation of it. A man may have noble ends to accomplish by such accumulation: he may design to relieve his destitute friends or kindred; he may desire to foster good institutions, and to help good objects; or, he may wish to retire to some other sphere of usefulness and exertion, which shall be more congenial to his taste and affections. But it is a different feeling, it is the desire of accumulation for the sake

of securing a life of ease and gratification, for the sake of escaping from exertion and self-denial—this is the wrong way of thinking which I would point out, and which I maintain to be common. I do not say that it is universal among the seekers of wealth; I do not say that *all* who propose to retire from business, propose to retire to a life of complete indolence or indulgence; but I say that many do: and I am inclined to say that all propose to themselves an independence, and an exemption from the necessity of exertion, which are not likely to be good for them; and, moreover, that they wed themselves to these ideas of independence and exemption, to a degree that is altogether irrational, unchristian, and inconsistent with the highest and noblest views of life. That a man should desire so to provide for himself, as in case of sickness or disability, not to be a burthen upon his friends or the public, or in case of his death, that his family should not be thus dependant, is most reasonable, proper, and wise. But that a man should wear out half of his life in an almost slavish devotion to business; that he should neglect his health, comfort, and mind, and waste his very heart with anxiety, and all to build a castle of indolence in some fairy land—this I hold to be unwise and wrong. I am saying nothing now of particular emergencies into which a man may, rightly or wrongly, have brought himself; I speak only of the general principle.

And the principle, I say, in the first place, is unwise, wrong, injurious, and dangerous, with reference to business itself. It is easy to see that the different views of business, implied in the foregoing remarks, will impart to the whole process a different character. If a man enters upon it as the occupation of his life; if he looks upon it as a useful and honourable course; if he is interested in its moral uses, and, what we demand of every high-minded profession, if he thinks more of its uses than of its fruits, more of a high and honourable character than of any amount of gains; and if, in fine, he is willing to conform to that ordinance of Heaven, which has appointed industry, action, effort, to be the spring of improvement,—then, of course, he will calmly and patiently address himself to his task, and fulfil it with wisdom and moderation. But if business is a mere expedient to gain a fortune, a race run for a prize, a game played for a great stake, then it as naturally follows, that there will be eagerness and absorption, hurry and anxiety; it will be a race for the swift, and a game for the dexterous, and a battle for the strong: life will be turned into a scene of hazard and strife, and its fortunes will often hang upon the cast of a die.

I must add, that the danger of all this is greatly increased by a circumstance already alluded to—I mean the rapid expansion of the principle of political freedom. Perhaps the first natural development of that principle was to be looked for in the pursuit of property. Property is the most obvious form of individual power, the most immediate and palpable ministration to human ambition. It was natural, when the weights and burthens of old restrictions were taken off, that men should first rush into the career of accumulation. I say restrictions; but there have been restraints *upon the mind*, which are, perhaps, yet more worthy of notice. The mass of mankind, in former ages, have ever felt that the high and splendid prizes of life were not for them. They have consented to poverty, or to mediocrity at the utmost, as their inevitable lot: but a new arena is now spread for them,

and they are looking to the high places of society as within their reach. The impulse imparted to private ambition, by this possibility, has not, I think, been fully considered; and it cannot, perhaps, be fully calculated. And it should also be brought into the account, that our imperfect civilization has not yet gone beyond the point of awarding a leading, and perhaps paramount, consideration in society to mere wealth. Conceive, then, what must be the effect, upon a man in humble and straitened circumstances, of the idea that it is possible for him to rise to this distinction. The thoughts of his youth, perhaps, have been lowly and unaspiring; they have belonged to that place which has been assigned him in the old *regime* of society: but in the rapid progress of that equalizing system which is spreading itself over the world, and amidst the unprecedented facilities of modern business, a new idea is suddenly presented to him. As he travels along the dusty road of toil, visions of a palace, of splendour, and equipage, and state, rise before him; his may be the most enviable and distinguished lot in the country; he who is now a slave of the counting-room or counter, of the work-bench or the carman's stand, may yet be one, to whom the highest in the land shall bow in homage. Conceive, I say, the effect of this new idea upon an individual, and upon a community. It must give an unprecedented and dangerous impulse to society; it must lead to extraordinary efforts and measures for acquisition; it will have the most natural effect upon the extension of traffic and the employment of credit. It may be expected, that in such circumstances men will borrow and bargain as they have never done before; that the lessons of the old prudence will be laid aside; that the old plodding and painstaking course will not do for the excited and stimulated spirit of such an age.

This eagerness for acquiring fortunes, tends equally to defeat the ultimate, the providential design of business. That design, I have said, is to train men by action, by labour, and care, by the due exertion of their faculties, to mental and moral accomplishment. It is necessary to this end, that business should be conducted with regularity, patience, and calmness: that the mind should not be diverted from a fair application of its powers by any exaggerated or fanciful estimate of the results; especially, if that contemplation of results involves the idea of *escaping* from all care and occupation, must it constantly hinder the fulfilment of the providential design. The very spirit of business, *then*, is the spirit of resistance to that design: but even if it were not, yet it is evident, that neither the mental nor moral faculties of a human being have any fair chance, amidst agitations and anxieties, amidst dazzling hopes and disheartening fears. Certainly, it must be admitted, that a time of excessive absorption in business is anything but a period of improvement. How many in such seasons have sunk in character and in all the aims of life—have lost their habits of reading and reflection, their habits of meditation and prayer!

Business, in its ultimate, its providential design, is a school. Neglected, forgotten, perhaps ridiculed, as this consideration may be, it is the great and solemn truth. Man is placed in this school as a learner of lessons for eternity. What he shall learn, not what he shall get, is of chief, of eternal import to him. As to property, "it is certain," to use the language of an Apostle, "that as we brought nothing into this world, we can carry nothing out of it." But there is one thing which

we shall carry out of it, and that is, the *character* which we have formed in the very pursuits by which property has been acquired.

In the next place, this passion for rapid accumulation, thus pushed to eagerness and vehemence, and liable to be urged to rashness and recklessness, leads to another evil, which, to any rational apprehension of things, cannot be accounted small; and that is, the evil of sacrificing in business the end to the means.

"Live while you live," is a maxim which has a good sense as well as a bad one. But the man who is sacrificing all the proper ends of life, for something to be enjoyed twenty years hence, can scarcely be said to live *while* he lives. He is *not* living *now*, in any satisfactory way, he confesses; he is going to live by and by; that is, when and where he does not live, and never may live; nay, where it is probable he never will live. For not one man in thirty, of those who intend to retire from business, ever does retire. And yet, how many suffer this dream about retiring, to cheat them out of the substantial ends of acquisition—comfort, improvement, happiness—as they go on!

How then stands the account? In seeking property a man has certain ends in view. Does he gain them? The lowest of them, comfort—does he gain that? No, he will tell you, he has little enough of comfort; that is to come. Having forsaken the path of regular and moderate and sure acquisition, in which his fathers walked, he has plunged into an ocean of credit, spread the sails of adventurous speculation, is tossed upon the giddy and uncertain waves of a fluctuating currency, and liable, any day, to be wrecked by the storms that are sweeping over the world of business. The means, the *means*—of ease, of comfort, of luxury—he must have; and yet the things themselves—ease, comfort, and the true enjoyment of luxury—are the very things which he constantly fails to reach. He is ever saying, that he must *get out* of this turmoil of business; and yet he never does get out of it. The very eagerness of the pursuit, not only deprives him of all ease and comfort as he goes on, but it tends constantly to push the whole system of business to that excess, which brings about certain reaction and disappointment. Were it not better for him to live while he lives—to enjoy life as it passes? Were it not better for him to live richer and die poorer? Were it not best of all for him, to banish from his mind that erring dream of future indolence and indulgence, and to address himself to the business of life, as the school of his earthly education; to settle it with himself now, that independence, if he gains it, is *not* to give him exemption from employment; that in order to be a happy man, he must always, with the mind or with the body, or with both, be a labourer; and, in fine, that the reasonable exertion of his powers, bodily and mental, is not to be regarded as mere drudgery, but as a good discipline, a wise ordination, a training in this primary school of our being, for nobler endeavours, and spheres of higher activity hereafter? For never surely is activity to cease; and he who proposes to resign half his life to indolent enjoyment, can scarcely be preparing for the boundless range and the intenser life that is to come.

But there are higher ends of acquisition than mere comfort. For I suppose, that few seekers of wealth can be found, who do not propose mental culture, and a beneficent use of property, as among their objects. And, with a fulfilment of these purposes, a *moderate* pursuit

is perfectly compatible. But how is it, when that pursuit becomes an eager and absorbing strife for fortune? What is the language of fact and experience? Amidst such engrossing pursuits, is there any time for reading? Are any literary habits, or any habits of mental culture, formed? I suppose those questions carry with them their own answer. But the over-busy man, though he is neglecting his mind now, means to repair that error by and by. That is the great mistake of all. He will not find the habits he wants all prepared and ready for him, like that pleasant mansion of repose to which he is looking. He will find habits there, indeed; but they will be the habits he has been cultivating for twenty years, not those he has been neglecting. The truth he will then find to be, that he does not love to read or study, that he never did love it, and that he probably never will love it.

I do not say that reading is the only means of mental cultivation. Business itself *may* invigorate, enlarge, and elevate the mind. But then it must be, because large views are taken of it; because the mind travels beyond the counter and the desk, and studies the geography, politics, and social tendencies of the world; investigates the laws of trade, and the philosophy of mechanism, and speculates upon the morals and ends of all business. Nay, and the trader and the craftsman, if he would duly cultivate his mind, must, like the lawyer, physician, and clergyman, travel beyond the province of his own profession, and bring the contributions of every region of thought, to build himself up in the strength and manhood of his intellectual nature.

And therefore I say with double force of asseveration, that he who has pursued business in such a way as to have neglected all just mental culture, has sacrificed the end to the means. He has gained money, and lost knowledge; he has gained splendour, and lost accomplishment; gained tinsel, and lost gold; gained an estate, and lost an empire; gained the world, and lost his soul.

And thus it is with all the ends of accumulation. The beneficent use, the moral elevation, which every high-minded man will propose to himself, are sacrificed in the eagerness of the pursuit. A man may give, and give liberally; but this may be a very different thing from *using* property beneficently and wisely. I confess, that on this account I look with exceeding distrust upon all our city charities; because men have no time to look into the cases and questions that are presented to them; because they give recklessly, without system or concert. I believe that immense streams of charity are annually flowing around us, which tend only to deepen the channels of poverty and misery. He who gives money to save time, cannot be acting wisely for others; and he who does good *only* by agents and almoners, cannot be acting wisely for himself. And yet this is the course to which excessive devotion to gain must lead. The man has no time to think for himself; and therefore, custom must be his law; or his clergyman, perhaps, is his conscience. He is an excellent disciple in the school of implicit submission. He attends a sound divine; he gives bountifully to the missions or to the almshouses; he suffers himself to be assessed, perhaps, in the one tenth of his income; and there end with him all the uses and responsibilities of wealth. His mind is engrossed with acquisition to that extent, that he has no proper regard to the ends of acquisition. Nay more, he comes, perhaps, to that pass in fatuity, that

he substitutes altogether the means for the end, and embraces his possessions with the insane grasp of the miser.

On the whole, and in fine, this passion for a fortune diverts man from his true dignity, his true function—which lies in exertion, in labour.

I can conceive of reasons why I might lawfully, and even earnestly, desire a fortune. If I could fill some fair palace, itself a work of art, with the productions of lofty genius; if I could be the friend and helper of humble worth; if I could mark out where failing health or adverse fortune pressed it hard, and soften or stay the bitter hours that are hastening it to madness or to the grave; if I could stand between the oppressor and his prey, and bid the fetter and the dungeon give up its victim; if I could build up great institutes of learning and academies of art; if I could open fountains of knowledge for the people, and conduct its streams in the right channels; if I could do better for the poor than to bestow alms upon them—even to think of them, and devise plans for their elevation in knowledge and virtue, instead of for ever opening the old reservoirs and resources for their improvidence; if, in fine, wealth could be to me the handmaid of exertion, facilitating effort, and giving success to endeavour, then might I lawfully, and yet warily and modestly, desire it. But if wealth is to do nothing for me but to minister ease and indulgence, and to place my children in the same bad school, I fearlessly say, though it be in face of the world's dread laugh, that I do not see why I should desire it, and that I do not desire it!

Are my reasons asked for this strange decision? Another, in part, shall give them for me. "Two men," says a quaint writer, "two men I honour, and no third. First, the toil-worn craftsman, that with earth-made implement, laboriously conquers the earth, and makes her man's. Venerable to me is the hard hand—crooked, coarse; wherein, notwithstanding, lies a cunning virtue, indefeasibly royal, as of the sceptre of this planet. Venerable, too, is the rugged face, all weather-tanned, besoiled with its rude intelligence; for it is the face of a man, living man-like. Oh, but the more venerable for thy rudeness, and even because we must pity as well as love thee! Hardly-entreated brother! For us was thy back so bent, for us were thy straight limbs and fingers so deformed. Thou wert our conscript, on whom the lot fell, and fighting our battles, wert so marred. For in thee, too, lay a God-created form, but it was not to be unfolded; encrusted must it stand with the thick adhesions and defacement of labour; and thy body, like thy soul, was not to know freedom. Yet toil on, toil on; thou art in thy duty, be out of it who may; thou toilest for the altogether indispensable, for daily bread.

"A second man I honour, and still more highly; him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable; not daily bread, but the bread of life. Is not he, too, in his duty; endeavouring towards inward harmony; revealing this, by act or by word, through all his outward endeavours, be they high or low? Highest of all, when his outward and his inward endeavour are one; when we can name him artist; not earthly craftsman only, but inspired thinker, that with heaven-made implement conquers heaven for us! If the poor and humble toil that we have food, must not the high and glorious toil for him in return,

that he have light and guidance, freedom, immortality?—These two, in all their degrees, I honour; all else is chaff and dust, which let the wind blow where it listeth.

"Unspeakably touching is it, however, when I find both dignities united; and he, that must toil outwardly for the lowest of man's wants, is also toiling inwardly for the highest. Sublimer in this world know I nothing, than a peasant saint, could such now anywhere be met with. Such an one will take thee back to Nazareth itself; thou wilt see the splendour of heaven spring forth from the humblest depths of earth, like a light shining in great darkness." *

And who, I ask, is that *third* man, that challenges our respect? Say that the world were made to be the couch of his repose, and the heavens to curtain it. Grant that the revolving earth were his rolling chariot, and all earth's magnificence were the drapery that hung around his gorgeous rest; yet could not that august voluptuary—let alone the puny idler of our city streets—win from a wise man one sentiment of respect. What is there glorious in the world, that is not the product of labour, either of the body, or of the mind? What is history, but its record? What are the treasures of genius and art, but its work? What are cultivated fields, but its toil? The busy marts, the rising cities, the enriched empires of the world—what are they, but the great treasure-houses of labour? The pyramids of Egypt, the castles, and towers, and temples of Europe, the buried cities of Mexico—what are they but tracks, all round the world, of the mighty footsteps of labour? Antiquity had not been without it. Without it, there were no memory of the past; without it, there were no hopes for the future.

Let then labour, the world's great ordinance, take its proper place in the world. Let idleness, too, have the meed that it deserves. Honour, I say, be paid wherever it is due. Honour, if you please, to unchallenged indolence—for that which all the world admires hath, no doubt, some ground for it: honour, then, to undisturbed, unchallenged indolence—for it reposes on treasures that labour sometime gained and gathered. It is the effigy of a man, upon a splendid mausoleum—somebody built that mausoleum—somebody put that dead image there. Honour to him that does nothing, and yet does not starve; he hath his significance still; he is a standing proof that *somebody* has worked.

Nay, rather let us say, honour to the worker—to the toiler—to him who produces, and not alone consumes—to him who puts forth his hand to add to the treasure-heap of human comforts, and not alone to take away! Honour to him who goes forth amidst the struggling elements to fight his battle, and shrinks not, with cowardly effeminacy, behind pillows of ease! Honour to the strong muscle and the manly nerve, and the resolute and brave heart! Honour to the sweaty brow, and to the toiling brain! Honour to the great and beautiful offices of humanity—to manhood's toil and woman's task—to parental industry, to maternal watching and weariness—to teaching wisdom and patient learning—to the brow of care that presides over the state, and to many-handed labour that toils in the workshops and fields, beneath its sacred and guardian sway!

* Thomas Carlyle.

ON THE MORAL LIMITS OF ACCUMULATION.

PROVERBS xxx. 8, 9: "Give me neither poverty nor riches; lest I be full and deny thee, and say, who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

IN my last discourse, I considered some of the evil consequences of the passion for accumulation; in the present, I propose to point out some of the moral limits to be set to that passion. In other words, the limits to accumulation, the wholesome restraints upon the passion for it, which are prescribed by feelings of general philanthropy and justice, by the laws of morality, and by a sober consideration of the natural effects of wealth upon ourselves, our children, and the world—these are the topics of our present meditation.

I cannot help feeling here, the difficulties under which the pulpit labours in the discussion of the points now before us. Some, indeed, will think them unsuitable to the pulpit, as not being sufficiently religious. Others seem to be disposed to limit the pulpit to the utterance of general and unquestionable truths. To these views I cannot assent. The points which I am discussing are, in the highest degree, moral; they are practically religious; they belong to the morality and religion of daily life. And then again, as to what the preacher shall say, I do not think that he is to be confined to truisms, or to self-evident truths, or to truths in which all shall agree. We come here to deliberate on great questions of morality and duty; to consider what is true, what is right. In doing this, the preacher may bring forward views in which some of his hearers cannot agree with him; how, indeed, should it be otherwise. But he does not pretend to utter infallible sentences. He may be wrong. But he is none the less bound to utter what he does believe, and thinks to be worthy of attention. This office I attempt to discharge among you. And I ask you not to take ill, at my hands, that which you would not so take, if I uttered it by your firesides. And if I am wrong, on some such occasion perhaps you will set me right.

Let me proceed, then, frankly to lay before you some reflections that have impressed my own mind, in regard to the limitations which good feeling, justice, and wisdom, ought perhaps, to set to the pursuit of wealth.

In the first place, then, I doubt whether this immense accumulation in a few hands, while the rest of the world is comparatively poor, does not imply an unequal, an unfair distribution of the rewards of industry. I may be wrong on this point; and if I were considered as speaking with any authority from the pulpit, I should not make the suggestion:

yet speaking as I do, with no assumption, but with the modesty of doubt, I shall venture to submit this point to your consideration.

It would seem to be an evident principle of humanity and justice, that property and the means of comfort should bear some proportion to men's industry. Now we know that they do not. I am not denying that, in general, the hard-working man labours less with the mind; and that he is often kept poor, either by improvidence and wastefulness, or because he has less energy and sagacity, than others bring into the business of life. I do not advocate any absurd system of agrarian levelling. I believe that wealth was designed to accumulate in certain hands, to a certain extent; because I perceive that this naturally results from the superior talents and efforts of certain individuals. But I cannot help thinking, that the disproportion is greater than it ought to be.

In order to bring this question home to your apprehension, let me ask you to suppose that, some years ago, any one of you had come to this city with a beloved brother, to prepare for a life of business. Let me suppose that you had been placed with a merchant, and he with a carman: both lawful, useful, and necessary callings in society: somebody must discharge each of these offices. Now you know that the results would probably be, that you would be rich, or at least possessed of an easy property, and that he would be poor; or, at any rate, that you would have a fair chance of acquiring a fortune from your industry, and that he would have no such chance from his industry. Now let me further suppose, that you did not treat him as *some* men treat their poor relations; passing them by and striving to forget them—almost wishing they did not exist; but that you continued on terms of kind and intimate intercourse with him; that you constantly interchanged visits with him, and could compare the splendour of your dwelling with the poverty of his: I ask you, if you would not feel, if you could help feeling, that society had dealt unjustly with you and with him in this matter? But I say that every man is your brother; and that what you would thus feel for your brother, you are bound to feel for every man!

I know that it is said, in regard to accumulation in general, that capital has its claims; but I cannot help thinking that they are overrated, in comparison with the claims of human nerves and sinews. Suppose that of a thousand men engaged in a great manufacturing establishment, ten possess the capital and oversee the establisment, and the nine hundred and ninety do the work. Can it be right, that the ten should grow to immense wealth, and that the nine hundred and ninety should be for ever poor? I admit that something is to be allowed for the risk taken by the capitalist. I have heard it pleaded, indeed, that he is extremely liable to fail, and often does so—while the poor, heaven help them! never fail. But it seems to me that this consideration is not quite fairly pleaded. It is said that there is a risk. But does not the capitalist, to a certain extent, make the risk? Is not his risk often in proportion to the urgency with which he pushes the business of accumulation, and to that neglect and infidelity of his agents and workmen, which must spring from their having so slight a common interest with him in his undertakings? The risks will be smaller, when the pursuit of property is more restrained and reasonable, and when the rewards of industry are more equal and just. But I

hear it said again, that "the poor are wasteful; and that to increase their wages is only to increase their vices." Let me tell you, that poverty is the parent of improvidence and desperation. Those who have been brought up in that school may, very possibly, for a while, abuse their increased means: but in the long run, it cannot be so. Nay, by the very terms of your proposition, the abuse will cease with the desperation of poverty. Give the poor some hope; give them some means; give them something to lean upon; give them some interest in the order and welfare of society; and they will become less wasteful, less reckless and vicious.

Indeed, is it not obvious, can any one with his eyes open deny, that the extremes of condition in the world, the extremes of wealth and poverty, furnish us with the extremes of vice and dissipation? And does not this fact settle and prove, beyond all question, that it is desirable that accumulation should be restrained within some bounds on the one hand; and on the other that indigence should be lessened? What is the state of the operatives in the manufacturing districts of England? Only worse than that of the idlers in that kingdom, who are living and rioting upon overgrown fortunes. Let the conditions of men approach the same inequality in this or any other country, and we shall witness the same results. The tendency of things among us, I rejoice to believe, is not to that result; but it is, no doubt, the constant tendency of private ambition.

I am sensible, my friends, that I have made a large demand on your candour, in laying this question before you. It is paying the highest compliment I could pay to your fairness of mind. I only ask that you will treat my argument with equal generosity.

But I proceed to another point. In order to the rapid accumulation of property in all ordinary cases, a great expansion of credit is necessary. A man cannot grow suddenly rich by the labour of his hands, and he must therefore use the property or the promises of others, in order to compass this end. Now there is a question which I have never seen stated in the books of moral philosophy, which I have not heard discussed in the pulpit, and yet it is a point which deserves a place in the code of commercial morality; and that is, how far it is right for a man to use credit—that is, to extend his business beyond his actual capital? I am sensible that it is extremely difficult, if it is not indeed impossible, to lay down any exact rule on this subject; and yet it seems to me none the less worthy of consideration. Certainly, it must be admitted that there is a point somewhere, beyond which it is not prudent, and, therefore, not right, to go. Certainly it cannot be right, as it appears to me, for a man to use all the credit he can get. It could not be right, for instance, that upon a capital of ten thousand, a man should do a business of ten millions. No man ought to trust his powers to such an undefinable extent. No man's creditors, were he to fail, could be satisfied with his having accepted trusts from others in the shape of credits, which common prudence shall pronounce to be rash and hazardous. There is a common prudence, if there is no exact rule about this matter; and the borrower is most especially bound to observe it; and certainly, every honest man, being a borrower, would observe it, if he did but sufficiently think of it. The want of this thought, is the very reason why I bring forward the subject.

With regard to the rule, I have it as the deliberate opinion of one of the greatest bankers in Europe, that a man should not extend his business to more than three times his capital; and if it be a large business, to not more than twice his capital. I do not say that this is the rule, though I have the greatest respect for the judgment that laid it down. I do not say that it is the rule, because I am advised on the other hand, by very competent judges, that the rule must vary exceedingly with the different kinds of business which a man may pursue.

I do not undertake, then, to lay down any particular rule, but I urge the claims of general prudence. I wish to call attention to this point. I am persuaded that it is for want of reflection, and not from want of principle, that many have adventured out upon an ocean of credit, where they have not only suffered shipwreck themselves, but carried down many a goodly vessel with them. It is said, that the government have spread temptation before the people, by adopting measures which lead to extraordinary issues of bank paper. It may be so: I believe that it is so; though this can scarcely be supposed, by the most jealous, to have been a matter of design. But grant that it be so; what I maintain is, that the people ought not to have yielded to the temptation to the extent that many have done. The borrower, I hold, is specially and solemnly bound to be prudent. He is bound to be more prudent in the use of other men's property than of his own. A man should be more cautious in taking credit than in using capital: but I fear that the very reverse of this is commonly the fact. I fear that most men are more reckless when they use the means which credit gives them, than they would be in using their own absolute and fixed property. In small matters, we know that immediate payment is a check to expenditure. Why is it, but for this, that every petty dealer is anxious to open a credit with your family? He knows that your expenditures will be freer, your purchases larger, and that a more considerable amount will be made up at the end of the year, because you buy on credit. But look at the subject in a wider view: I know that some men do plunge more recklessly into the great game of business, because the game is played with credit; with counters, and not with coins. I have heard it observed—and I confess, that it was with a coolness and nonchalance that amazed me—that a man may as well take a good strong hold of business while he is about it, since he has nothing to lose by it. The sentiment is monstrous. It ought to shake the very foundations of every warehouse where it is uttered. There ought to be a sacred caution in the use of credit. And although I cannot pretend to define the precise law of its extension, yet this I will say, that never, till I see a man adventuring his own property more freely than he adventures that which he borrows of his neighbour, can I think he is right. Let this great and undeniably just moral principle be established, and I am persuaded that we shall at once see a wholesome restraint laid upon the use of credit.

There is one further point to which I wish to invite your attention; and that is, the practice, in cases of bankruptcy, of giving preference to certain creditors, who have made loans on that condition. Now, I maintain, that no man ought to offer credit, and that no man ought to accept it, on that condition. The practice is abolished in England; and I know, that *there* it is regarded as bringing a stain upon the commercial morality of this country.

I do not mean to charge with personal dereliction, any person who has, in times past, taken advantage of this rule. It has been the rule of the country, and has passed unquestioned. And so long as it has been the rule, and money has been borrowed and lent on that principle, and it was considered right so to do, it was perhaps right, as between man and man, that cases of insolvency should be settled on that principle; but as a theoretical principle of general application, I hold that it is utterly wrong. Our laws, indeed, disallow it, and public opinion ought not, for another hour, to sustain it.

The principle is dishonest: it is treachery to the body of a man's creditors. He appeared before them with a certain amount of means; and upon the strength of those means, they were willing to give him credit. Those means were the implied condition, the very basis of the loan; without them they would not have made it. They saw that he had a large stock of goods; that he was doing a large business; and they thought there was no danger: they depended, in fact, upon that visible property, in case of difficulties. But difficulty arises, failure comes; and then they find that much or all of that property is preoccupied and wrested from their hands by certain confidential pledges. If they had known this, they would have stood aloof; and therefore, I say, that there is essential deception in the case.

Again, lending on such a principle loses all its generosity; and borrowing is liable to lose all the prudence and virtue that properly belong to it. If a man lends to his young friend or relative, on the sole strength of affection and confidence towards him, it is a transaction which bestows a grace upon mercantile life. But if he lends as a preference creditor, he takes no risk, and shows no confidence; for he knows that the borrower, upon the strength of *his* loan, can easily get property enough into his hands, to make *him* perfectly secure. And let it be observed, that, in proportion as the acquisition of confidence is less necessary; in proportion, that is to say, as virtue and ability are less necessary to set up a man in business, are they less likely to be cultivated: and so far as this principle goes, therefore, it tends to sap and undermine the whole business character of a country. Nay, it is easy to see, that, under the cloak of these confidential transactions, the entire business between the borrower and lender may be the grossest and most iniquitous gambling. Of course, I do not say that this is common; but I say, that the principle ought not to be tolerated, which is capable of such abuses.

This principle, I think, moreover, is the very key-stone of the arch that supports many an overgrown fabric of credit. And this observation has a two-fold bearing. Much of the credit that is obtained, could not exist without this principle; that is one thing: but furthermore, I hold, that all the extension of credit which depends on this principle, ought not to exist at all. It ought not, because the principle is dishonest and treacherous; and it would not, because the first credit which often puts a man in the possession of visible means, is not given on the strength of confidence in him, but on the strength of the secret pledge; and then the after credits are based on those visible means. Let every man that borrows tell, as he ought to do, the amount of his confidential obligations, and many would find their credit seriously curtailed; and to that extent, most assuredly, it ought to be curtailed.

I have thus spoken of the spirit of gain as liable—not as *always being*, but as liable—to be in conflict with the great principles of social and commercial justice. I might add, that the manner in which the gains of business are sometimes clung to, amidst the wreck of fortunes, is a powerful and striking illustration of the same moral danger. He who regards no limits of justice in acquiring property, will break all bonds of justice to keep it.

And here I must carefully and widely distinguish. I give all honour to the spirit which many among us have shown in such circumstances; to the manly fortitude and disinterestedness of men, who have comparatively cared nothing for themselves, but who have been almost crushed to the earth by what they have suffered for their friends; to the heroic cheerfulness and soothing tenderness of woman in such an hour, ready to part with every luxury, and holding the very pearl of her life in the unsullied integrity of her husband. I know full well that that lofty integrity is the only rule ever thought of by many, in the painful adjustment of their broken fortunes. And I know, and the public knows, that, if they retain a portion of their splendour for a season, it is reluctantly, and because it cannot, in the present circumstances, be profitably disposed of—and in strict trust for their creditors. But there are bankrupts of a different character, as you well know. I do not know that any such are in this presence; but if there were a congregation of such before me, I should speak no otherwise than I shall now speak. I say, that there are men of a different character; men who intend permanently to keep back a part of the price which they have sworn to pay: and I tell you, that God's altar, at which I minister, shall hear no word from me, concerning them, but a word of denunciation. It is dishonesty, and it ought to be infamy. It is robbery, though it live in splendour, and ride in state; robbery, I say, as truly as if, instead of inhabiting a palace, it were consigned to the dungeons of Sing-Sing. And take care, my brethren, as ye shall stand at the judgment-bar of conscience and of God, that ye fall not at all beneath this temptation. The times are times of sore and dreadful peril to the virtue of the country; they are times, in which it is necessary even for honest men to gird up the loins of their minds, and to be sober and watchful; ay, watchful over themselves. Remember, all such, I adjure you, that the dearest fortune you can carry into the world, will not compensate you for the least iota of your integrity surrendered and given up. Oh! sweeter, in the lowliest dwelling to which you may descend, shall be the thought that you have kept your integrity immaculate, than all the concentrated essence of luxury to your taste, all its combined softness to your couch, all its gathered splendour to your state. Ay, prouder shall you be in the humblest seat, than if, with ill-kept gains, you sat upon the throne of a kingdom.

I come now to consider, in the last place, the limitations to be set to the desire of wealth, by a sober consideration of its too probable effects upon ourselves, upon our children, and upon the world at large. And here let me ask two preliminary questions.

Can that be so necessary to human well-being, as many consider wealth to be, which necessarily falls to the lot but of a few? Can that be the very feast and wine of life, when but a few thousands of the human race are allowed to partake of it? If it were so, surely God's

providence were less kind and liberal, than we are bound to think it. God has not made a world of rich men, but rather a world of poor men; or of men, at least, who must toil for a subsistence. That, then, must be the good condition for man, nay, the best condition; and we see, indeed, that it is the grand sphere of human improvement.

In the next place, can that be so important to human welfare, which, if it were possessed by all, would be the most fatal injury possible? And here I must desire that every person, whose pursuit of property this question may affect, will extend his thoughts beyond himself. He may say that it would be a good thing, if *he* could acquire wealth; and perhaps it would; he may say that he does not see that riches would do him any harm; and perhaps they would not: he may have views that ennoble the pursuit of fortune. But the question is, would it be well and safe for four-fifths of the business community around him to become opulent? He must remember, that his neighbours have sought as well as he, and in a proportion, too, not far distant from what I have stated. They have sought, and had as good a right to succeed, as he had. Would it be well, that so general an expectation of fortune should be gratified? Would it be well for society, well for the world? Only carry the supposition a little farther; only suppose the whole world to acquire wealth; only suppose it were possible that the present generation could lay up a complete provision for the next, as some men desire to do for their children, and you destroy the world at a single blow. All industry would cease with the necessity for it; all improvement would stop with the demand for exertion; the dissipation of fortunes, whose mischiefs are now countervailed by the healthful tone of society, would then breed universal disease, and break out into universal licence, and the world would sink into the grave of its own loathsome vices.

But let us look more closely, for a moment, at the general effect of wealth upon individuals and upon nations.

I am obliged, then, to regard with considerable distrust, the influence of wealth upon individuals. I know that it is a mere instrument, which may be converted to good or to bad ends. I know that it is often used for good ends; but I more than doubt whether the chances lean that way. Independence and luxury are not likely to be good for any man. Leisure and luxury are almost always bad for every man. I know that there are noble exceptions. But I have *seen* so much of the evil effect of wealth upon the mind—making it proud, haughty, and impatient; robbing it of its simplicity, modesty, and humility; bereaving it of its large, and gentle, and considerate humanity: and I have *heard* such testimonies, such astonishing testimonies, to the same effect, from those whose professional business it is to settle and adjust the affairs of large estates—that I more and more distrust its boasted advantages. I deny the validity of that boast. In truth, I am sick of the world's admiration of wealth. Almost all the noblest things that have been achieved in the world, have been achieved by poor men; poor scholars, and professional men; poor artisans and artists; poor philosophers and poets, and men of genius.

It does appear to me, that there is a certain staidness and sobriety, a certain moderation and restraint, a certain pressure of circumstances, that is good for man. His body was not made for luxuries; it sickens, sinks, and dies under them. His mind was not made for indulgence;

it grows weak, effeminate, and dwarfish, under that condition. It is good for us to bear the yoke; and it is especially good to bear the yoke in our youth. I am persuaded, that many children are injured by too much attention, too much care; by too many servants at home; too many lessons at school; too many indulgences in society; they are not left sufficiently to exert their own powers, to invent their own amusements, to make their own way: they are often inefficient and unhappy; they lack ingenuity and energy; because they are taken out of the school of providence, and placed in one which our own foolish fondness and pride have built for them. Wealth, without a law of entail to help it, has always lacked the energy even to *keep* its own treasures: they drop from its imbecile hand. What an extraordinary revolution in domestic life is that, which, in this respect, is presented to us all over the world! A man, trained in the school of industry and frugality, acquires a large estate; his children possibly keep it; but the third generation almost inevitably goes down the rolling wheel of fortune, and *there* learns the energy necessary to rise again. And yet we are, almost *all* of us, anxious to put our children, or to insure that our grandchildren shall be put, on this road to indulgence, luxury, vice, degradation, and ruin!

This excessive desire and admiration for wealth, is one of the worst traits in our modern civilization. We are, if I may say so, in an unfortunate dilemma in this matter. Our political civilization has opened the way for multitudes to wealth, and created an insatiable desire for it; but our mental civilization has not gone far enough to make a right use of it. If wealth were employed in promoting mental culture at home, and works of philanthropy abroad; if it were multiplying studies of art, and building up institutions of learning around us; if it were every way raising the intellectual and moral character of the world, there could scarcely be too much of it. But if the utmost aim, effort, and ambition of wealth, be to procure rich furniture and provide costly entertainments, I am inclined to say that there could scarcely be too little of it. "It employs the poor," do I hear it said? Better that it were *divided* with the poor. Willing enough am I, that it should be in few hands if they will use it nobly—with temperate self-restraint and wise philanthropy. But on no other condition will I admit that it is a good, either for its possessors or for anybody else. I do not deny that it may lawfully be, to a certain extent, the minister of elegancies and luxuries, and the handmaid of hospitality and physical enjoyment; but this I say, that just in such proportion as its tendencies, divested of all higher aims and tastes, are running that way, are they running to evil and to peril.

That peril, moreover, does not attach to individuals and families alone; but it stands, a fearful beacon, in the experience of cities and empires. The lessons of past times, on this subject, are emphatic and solemn. I undertake to say, that the history of wealth has always been a history of corruption and downfal: the people never existed that could stand the trial.

Boundless profusion—alas! for humanity—is too little likely to spread, for any people, the theatre of manly energy, rigid self-denial, and lofty virtue. Where is the bone, and sinew, and strength of a country? Where do you expect to find its loftiest talents and virtues? Where

its martyrs, to patriotism or religion? Where are the men to meet the days of peril and disaster? Do you look for them among the children of ease, and indulgence, and luxury?

All history answers. In the great march of the races of men over the earth, we have always seen opulence and luxury sinking before poverty, and toil, and hardy nurture. It is the very law that has presided over the great processions of empire. Sidon and Tyre, whose merchants possessed the wealth of princes; Babylon and Palmyra, the seats of Asiatic luxury; Rome, laden with the spoils of a world, overwhelmed by her own vices more than by the hosts of her enemies,—all these, and many more, are examples of the destructive tendencies of immense and unnatural accumulation. No lesson in history is so clear, so impressive, as this.

I trust, indeed, that our modern, our *Christian* cities and kingdoms are to be saved from such disastrous issues. I trust, that by the appropriation of wealth, less to purposes of private gratification, and more to purposes of Christian philanthropy and public spirit, we are to be saved. But this is the very point on which I insist. Men must become more generous and benevolent, not more selfish and effeminate, as they become more rich, or the history of modern wealth will follow in the sad train of all past examples; and the story of American prosperity and of English opulence, will be told as a moral, in empires beyond the Rocky Mountains, or in the newly-discovered continents of the Asiatic Seas!

ON THE NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL RELATIONS OF SOCIETY.

LUKE x. 29: "And who is my neighbour?"

WHAT is society? And what are the ties that give to society its strength, dignity, and beauty?

Let us make the attempt, though it will be difficult to lay aside all conventional ideas of this subject, and endeavour to contemplate it in the spirit of generous philosophy, and more beneficent Christianity. What is society, not as man has made it, but in its original elements and just relations?—what is it, in the constitution of God? What did he design that man should be to man, and what the bond between them?

The answer is given in words of authority: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." It is the bond of kind neighbourhood, of gentle affinity, of gracious sympathy. And "who is my neighbour?" Again, the sacred text answers. It is the Samaritan, the sinner, the sufferer. It is he who is cast down and trodden under foot; it is he who lies by the way-side, neglected and despised. Every man is your neighbour. No matter what is his condition, his clime, his nation; no matter from what country, trodden down with oppression, he hath come; no matter in what prison-house he hath toiled, or in what mournful garb poverty or neglect hath clothed him. If he can say, "I am a man," he puts forward a sacred and venerable claim. If he who could say, "I am a Roman citizen," could rouse in his behalf the sympathies of a whole mighty people,—he who can say, "I am a man," should touch the heart of all mankind.

It is the claim of a common nature which God has laid upon us. As strong as the bond of humanity itself, he has made the common tie. Nay, more; and dear as are the interests which he has committed to the sacred depository of each human bosom, and powerful as are the influences which one human being can exert upon another, has he made the obligation of love, pity, and humanity, to the common welfare. Humanity! the universal counterpart of each man's self; the multiplication of one's self into millions of suffering or happy beings!—Well might the Latin poet say, "I am a man, and nothing is foreign, nothing far from me that is human." And when a crowded Roman theatre once rose up in admiration of that noble sentiment, it was a homage as fit as it was beautiful; and fitly, from that day to this, has been borne, in the literature and on the bosom of nations, the record of that touching and noble saying.

But when I look more deeply into that humanity, and consider what it is, I feel that such a sentiment rises above generosity, and takes the

character of sanctity, and even of sublimity. I see a circle drawn around each human being, which it is not only sin, but sacrilege, to invade. For *what* is within that sacred pale that girds about every human heart? Joy, sorrow; fear, hope; *need*, the need of happiness, and—more sacred and awful still—the need of virtue! There, God hath made a being, whom nothing but virtue can suffice; whom nothing but infinity and eternity will content. I speak not the language of theology, but of fact. So God hath made us. That mighty burthen of a spiritual and divine *need* rests upon every human heart; and nothing but the Almighty power that placed it there, can ever relieve it. It is your soul, my friend, that bears this dread charge; but it is the soul of him, whosoever he be, that standeth next you in the worldly crowd; it is every soul in this assembly; it is every man in the world. Human society is the society of beings so charged and entrusted. And if a congress of kings and potentates shall be thought an imposing spectacle, and to demand the most heedful consideration and treatment from one to the other, what shall be the higher law for beings who act for virtue, for heaven, and for eternity!

Were it only happiness that is concerned, yet in the mysterious and inexplicable feeling of individuality which we all possess, the veriest outcast by the way-side has as much at stake as the monarch on his guarded throne. Poor men and rich men have, indeed, their distinct resorts and reliances; but there are no such things as a rich man's joy and a poor man's joy. Happiness hath no respect of persons. It is as dear to one man as to another; and the feeling that makes it so is not of man's, but of God's creating; and the sharp visitation of pain, whether it finds its way through the beggar's rags or the prince's cloth of gold, is alike sore and bitter to abide. Suffering is not an accident of our condition, but an ingredient of our being. Disease, whether it knocks at the cottage-wicket or the castle-gate, sends its thrilling summons, in equal disregard of haughty grandeur and shrinking penury. The inmates of the one, when revolving, beneath their humble roof, the fortunes of their lives, feel that they have, in their happiness, as much at stake as the lofty possessors of the other; and in that essential respect they have as much at stake.

To what conclusion, then, do we arrive? Is it a strange or an unexpected conclusion?—for this it is—that without any respect to external condition, one man has just as much right to have his virtue and happiness regarded as another man! Is there a man here who can look upon joy or sorrow with indifference, because they are found in a meaner garb than his own? I will not compromise, for one moment, the principle I maintain. I abhor that man, and I will say it. I abhor him, as worse than a traitor to his country, as a traitor to humanity; and I appeal, for my justification, to the most ordinary sentiments of every generous mind. Would you make that man your friend who could take pleasure in wantonly crushing an insect? What will you think, then, of the man who could coldly disregard, or carelessly wound, the feelings of a fellow-creature?

I have not wished to linger upon these preliminary steps; and therefore I hasten to observe, that we have thus come, by a direct path, to the consideration of social relationships. They are of two kinds, natural and artificial; and my purpose is, of course, not to go over the

whole ground—which would require volumes for the survey of it—but only to touch upon such points as are particularly pressed upon our notice by the present condition of society. The natural relations of society are such as spring from necessity, and may be considered as ordained by our Creator; the artificial are those which are devised and regulated by man.

Of those which are natural, or necessary to society itself, though there are many, such as those of husband and wife, parent and child, guardian and ward, brothers and sisters, I shall consider only the single but comprehensive relation of employers and employed; or, in other words, that of master and apprentice, householder and domestic, rich and poor. These are certainly among the inevitable relations of human beings; and no progress of the world, in civilization or Christianity, may ever be expected to abolish them.

Our business with them, then, is not to extirpate, but to improve them; and the questions that arise on this point are of some delicacy, and need to be touched with a careful hand. I frankly confess myself to be among the number of those, who think that the feudal distinctions of former days, the old relations of master and servant, have transmitted to us some errors, which need to be done away; and which, in this country, must be done away. But, on the contrary, I do not hold at all with those visionary persons, who expect that all distinctions in society will cease, and that men will stand on the level of perfect equality. Nay more, I maintain, that both necessity and propriety demand that the *manners* of different classes of society towards each other, shall differ. The manner of him who directs, must differ from the manner of him who is directed. On the one hand, there must be authority, or direction, if you please so to call it; and, on the other, acquiescence. The relation, indeed, is voluntary; no man among us is obliged to be the agent, workman, or domestic of another? but if he is such, then the relation requires that he should yield the acquiescence in question. And to that acquiescence, I repeat, a certain manner is appropriate—not slavish or obsequious, but cheerful and courteous; and I especially insist, that neither party is ever to forget the respect and kindness which are due from one human being to another.

But this great bond of humanity is, doubtless, often disregarded by both parties. Men strive and wrangle with each other, and are guilty of scorn or spite in their behaviour, forgetting what they are, forgetting that they are creatures of the same God, children of one common Father. On which side the fault chiefly lies, at the present era of American society, I confess that I am in doubt. Up to this time, or nearly to this time, I should have confidently said, that it was, where it always has been—with the class of employers. Power is ever liable to beget pride, injustice, and a haughty demeanour. But in a community, where the class of the employed has become so independent as it is in ours; where the sense of past injuries is rankling in the mind; where many false maxims tend to make all apparent inferiority peculiarly galling, and where the old conventional manners, once considered appropriate to that condition, are breaking up, the consequence is but too likely to be, in many, revolt, recklessness, discourtesy, and despite.

On which side the greatest courtesy and kindness are to be found, I

will not decide; nor is it necessary, in order to urging the duties that belong to both.

Let me offer it as a leading observation, that these duties, in this country, have assumed a new character, and a new importance. The relation of employers and employed among us is new. The workman here does not come to his employer, bowing and cringing for service, as the only thing that can keep him from starving. He stands before the great and powerful contractor or merchant, on a footing of comparative independence—of such independence, at least, as was never before known in any country. His labour is in request; if one man does not want it, another does. He is not obliged to sell it on such terms, as often grind to the dust the artisan of Birmingham and Manchester, or the lazzaroni of Naples, or the palanquin-bearer of Calcutta. This state of things, indeed, suggests some admonitions to the labouring classes, which I shall not fail to address to them; but at the same time, it imposes on employers some things, which I shall ask them to do, more than submit to as a matter of necessity. It calls them to consider and respect, more than employers have ever before done, the great claims of a common humanity.

I protest, then, against all overbearing haughtiness, and everything that indicates a want of respect and kindness, on the part of the employer. I do not say how common this treatment of the poor man is. I do not say, that there are ten men in this assembly who are guilty of it; but if there is one, then I say, that upon that case, I lay the heaviest weight of moral reprobation. I plead the great cause of humanity. I tell you, that he who stands before you with a coarse garb and sweaty brow, is yet a man; and that he is to be regarded and felt for as a man. Must I resort to the very alphabet of Christianity to teach you what is due to him? Must I remind you, that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth?" Must I tell you, that "God hath made the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom," amidst whose splendours all the appendages of your condition are but perishing baubles? Must I tell you, that the man, whom you are liable in your power to treat with injustice or indignity, may be a nobler man than you; dearer to God; and more worthy of all true respect than you are? Must I say, in so many words, that he has feelings as keen and sensitive, it may be, as your own? Must I say, that all the touching and venerable claims of humanity are stamped upon him as well as upon you; that wife, and children, and home—happiness, and hope, and heaven, are as dear to him as to you? What right have you, and where did you find it, to treat him any otherwise than as a brother man? You are, indeed, to give directions, and he is to follow them. But that is a simple compact between you, and does not compromise the respectability of either; and beyond that, I say, there is no law of substantial courtesy and kindness which is not to be observed between you. It is true, that men, whose hands and eyes are occupied with strenuous toil or business, cannot be engaged with making bows to each other; and this is not what I insist upon. But I would make the labourer understand, that I respect him according to his merits, as truly as I respect the gentleman; and I would make the gentleman who had no merits, understand, that I respect the honest and worthy labourer a thousand times more. What! shall I bring down the prin-

ciples of eternal truth and justice so low, that they may be buried in the plaited folds of a rich man's garment? Truth and justice forbid! Worth is worth; and no garb, before my eyes, shall ever clothe meanness with honour, or sink virtue to contempt.

We are all possessed, it is probable, with conventional notions on this subject, which expose us to do considerable injustice. Man looketh on the outward appearance. But I hold, that he who does not strive, in favour of principle and humanity, to correct the mistakes of worldly sense and fashion, is no noble or Christian man. And I say, too, that he who would assume all the airs of unfeeling superiority, which the spirit of society will tolerate, is either inexcusably thoughtless, or detestably unprincipled, and is just fit to be an oppressor in Russia, a tyrant in Constantinople, if not a man-stealer in Africa; and I maintain, moreover, that Christianity itself has made but little progress, where this care and consideration for our kind are not cherished. Vainly will you try to reconcile any man's claims to Christian virtue with harshness and insolence to his dependants. He may go from the very worship of God to this scorn and despite of man—it avails not. The spirit of Christ is the spirit of philanthropy. "He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen; how doth he love God whom he hath not seen?"

Nor is it enough to refrain from oppression and insolence. There are *duties* belonging to the relation of the employer. He is bound to feel an interest in his dependants, beyond that of obtaining their services. This interest he takes in his horse or his ox. This is not enough to be felt for a human being. The man who labours in your garden, or in your warehouse, or your manufactory, is not to be looked upon as a mere machine that is accomplishing so much work, and after it is done to be dismissed without a further thought. You ought to think kindly of that man, and to consider how you can, as a fellow-being, act towards him a brotherly part. You may find ways enough of doing this without going out of your sphere, and without being officious, or ostentatious, or offensively patronising in your kindness. Your very manners, inspiring in those who labour for you, good will, cheerfulness, and self-respect, may do much. Yes, your very manners may do more for their happiness and virtue, than if you doubled their wages, or gave them the most liberal presents. You may also speak kindly to them of their welfare, and of their families. You may become their adviser and friend. You may induce them to deposit a portion of their earnings in a savings' bank; and that money, so laid up and gradually accumulating, will be one of the best securities for their growing virtue, and courage, and self-respect. You may sometimes give them an interesting book to read—at least, during the leisure of Sunday, if they have no other time—and it will be a means both of safety and improvement on that holy day. You may make them feel that they have, in you and in your family, those who know them, and take a friendly interest in their respectability and good conduct; and they might be made to know, that if you should some day go home to your splendid dwelling, and say, that such or such an one had been that day intoxicated, or a brawler in the streets, it would spread a sadness over the face of that bright and happy circle. Your children might sometimes go to their children in sickness or in trouble, and

kindly take them by the hand. No fear that the hand, nurtured and softened in the bosom of luxury, would be soiled by that contact. There is a work of our greatest sculptor,* which represents a child-angel as conducting another child to heaven. Were it not a beautiful vision realized into life? Oh! when I think what rich families might do for poor families, what ministering angels they might be, to raise up the low and the fallen to comfort, to virtue, and to heaven, my heart swells at the contemplation, and I say, when *shall* the vision be realized into life?

Yet, let us not despair. There are things already done in our noble city which forbid despair. I say, in our noble city; and when I say this, I am not thinking of our splendid dwellings, of our wealth pouring in through a thousand channels, of our commerce spreading the sounding banners of its prosperous march over every sea, nor of that mighty repairing of our desolations, which the last year has witnessed; but I am thinking of the works of mercy that are done in this city. It is a fact, and I must state it with some formality, because to most persons it will be new and astonishing, that there is scarcely a poor family in our city which is not regularly visited by some Sunday-school teacher, or tract distributor, or minister at large, with a view to its moral enlightening and renovation. God bless and prosper the noble band who have thus gone forth into our waste places!—they are young men, many of them, rising into life, with their own cares and affairs to attend to; they are young women, some of them of our wealthiest families, and others who depend upon the labours of their needle for their subsistence; noble missionaries of mercy! fair sisters of charity!—again I bid them God speed! I bless them for my own sake, and for your sake—and in the name of Christ. When I came to this city, a little more than two years ago, I confess that the mighty mass of what seemed to me its desperate wickedness and misery, weighed upon my mind as a heavy burthen. It was a professional feeling, if you please so to consider it: my office called me to look upon the moral interests of men; and I almost shrunk from a residence in the presence of evils so stupendous, and, I thought, so incapable of any but the most distant relief. But within two years, I have learned that the dread wastes which stretched out before me in darkness and silence, are filled with benevolent action; that their long-neglected thresholds are tracked thickly over with footsteps of mercy, and their desolate walls are echoing the voices of Christian truth and love. Let the good work be *deepened* in any proportion to its *extent;* and this city will present the long-desired example of a great commercial emporium, purified by the beneficent instrumentality of its own prosperous inhabitants.

But to return; there is another sphere for female talent and virtue which I wish to point out; and that is beneath the domestic roof. I say talent; for to regulate a family of domestics in this country, is really an achievement of intellect as well as of virtue. The difficulties springing from the state of domestic service among us, I need not dwell upon. They are well known. They are, in fact, the great palpable difficulties of domestic life throughout the country. The real difficulties, indeed, are not those which are palpable: they lie deeper; they lie in

* Greenough.

the mind; and it is to the removal of these, that I would solicit your attention. And let it be considered, that the difficulties of the case, so far as they lie in the situation of the parties, cannot be removed; and that if any relief is to be found, it must be found in the mind. The relation of householders and domestics in this country is new. The latter are not dependant on the former, as they are in other countries; they have not the same interest to satisfy you; they have not the same anxiety to keep their place, as if the alternative were penury or starvation; and I trust they never will have. Whether you are satisfied, is not the only question. If they are not satisfied too, they may retire from your service, and readily find employment elsewhere. What, then, amidst all the difficulties of this situation, is to be done? Perpetual changes in a domestic establishment; no security against its being half broken up almost any day; no necessity on the part of those who temporarily compose it, of holding their place longer than the caprice or the whim of the moment may dictate; no bond of necessity for their good behaviour, like that which presses upon every other occupation, since they do not look upon their station as a permanent one, nor feel that they are taking a character to live and die by: they are looking to better their condition, to establish themselves in life, to pursue an independent course:—all these things, I say, occasion immense inconvenience, and the severest trials of temper. What, then, is to give us relief? I say, plainly and firmly, that I do not regret this independence of the class of domestics. I am glad that they can look to separate and permanent establishments. It is a fortunate condition for them. But even if it were not, it is *theirs* beyond recovery; and, therefore, the only relief must come through a consideration towards them, hitherto unknown in the world—a consideration respectful, wise, Christian-like, and kind. And here is the field for female talent and virtue, to which I have already referred. She who has the immediate charge of a family, should make her assistants feel, from the first, that she does not wish to regard them as hirelings, but as faithful friends. If, hardened by custom, or puffed up with pride, or absorbed in fashion, she never thinks of them but to exact from them their tasks, she must not wonder if they never think of her but to earn the price of those tasks. Committed to her care, subjected in a measure to her influence, as fellow-beings, she is bound to respect, cherish, and love them. She ought to study their character; to consider their situation, wants, and feelings; to promote the improvement of their minds and hearts; to provide for their gratification and entertainment; to make them cheerful and happy, if possible; to make them feel that her interest is common with theirs; and, in fine, to treat them, as she might reasonably wish to be treated in change of circumstances. Will you tell me that, when all this is done, many of them will prove extremely ungrateful? I must be allowed to doubt, when such is the result, whether all this *is* done. That is the very point to be reached: the removal of that ingratitude; the removal of that soured and irritated feeling that often settles at the bottom of the heart, even when there is the effervescence of many kind emotions on the surface. And it is not to be forgotten, that there are grievances, too, in the condition of the employed, which furnish some ground for this irritated feeling. Those who listen to me, may imagine that all the complaint, since they hear no other, is on one side. What

incessant trials, you say, there are with servants! But I can tell you of places where all the complaint is on the other side—of departments in the domestic establishment, where all the confidential communings together are filled with complaints of the master or mistress, or of their children.

This is a case, in short, where there are faults on both sides; and this is the impression, in fine, which I wish to make on the heads of families. I know that there are families where all is going on kindly and quietly, and I think that the number of such is increasing. But where it is not, I would admonish you against the injustice of supposing that all is right on your part. It was Pestalozzi, I think, who had the generosity to say, when his pupils did not learn, that the fault was his own; and this, doubtless, as a general maxim, is partly true; and this, without doubt, if not equally, is, in a measure, true of the masters of families, who fail in their office. If they would generously admit this, instead of constantly complaining of their difficulties, they would be prepared resolutely to address themselves to the task of working out that great reform in domestic manners and morals, which the very constitution of society among us demands. The general, who cannot command men; the contractor or overseer, who is always vexed by the insubordination and insolence of his workmen, is usually reported to be guilty of some fault or deficiency on his part; and this, I think, must be accounted equally true of the heads of a family who fail in like manner. I will only add, that the mighty power which controls all human beings, whether in the camp, the manufactory, or the workshop, is judicious kindness; and that this must be the controlling power in all well-ordered and happy families.

Let me now say one word to the class of the employed; and, especially, of domestics. Why should it be thought a hardship or a degradation, to minister to the comfort and happiness of our fellow-beings? It is the high office, the noble bond of humanity, to assist, to serve one another. It appears to me, that I could take a sincere pleasure in ministering to the daily and hourly satisfactions of any one, with whom circumstances had for a time connected me; in smoothing his path for him; in relieving him from annoyances and vexations; in facilitating his business, his studies, or his enjoyments. What an affection, in this domestic relation, what a true friendship, might one win from another, never to end but with life! And what a happiness would this be to carry away from a family, rather than to retire in anger, and to have one's retirement felt as a relief!

I say, that it is no disgrace to give this domestic assistance. It is not slavery; it is a respectable compact, which one finds it expedient to make with another; and the only real disgrace is in being unfaithful to the terms of that compact. We are made to serve one another. We are all servants. The man who stands in his warehouse, or behind his counter, and sells goods to another, is his servant for the time. The lawyer is the servant of his clients, the physician of his patients, and the clergyman of his people. The highest in the land is only so much more the servant of all.

The domestic but stands in one of the many relations of service; one that is alike ordained of Heaven, and which, therefore, cannot be intrinsically dishonourable. He is apt, I know, to imagine that the

distinctions which are made between him and his employers; the different situations and apartments which he occupies; his separation from them in the offices of life, in conversation, amusement, meals, &c. imply some discredit. But all this, let him observe, is necessary to the general comfort, and to his own comfort. If any ten persons were to unite to form a domestic establishment, they would find the very distinctions now complained of to be inevitable. Some must give directions, and others must follow them; some must provide entertainments, and others must give them; some must prepare and serve dinner, and others must partake of it. These conditions cannot be blended, without absolute confusion and discomfort. All that could be demanded in the case supposed, would be a rotation of these offices. But can this be fairly demanded in actual life? Can it be expected, that he who has built a house, and furnished it, and who pays all its expenses, should not occupy the highest situation in it? I might as well demand that my neighbour, who lives at the next door, should not occupy a grander house than mine, should not have a more splendid equipage, or keep a more luxurious table. Nay, many domestics live in more style, dress better, and feed more daintily, than multitudes of the poor who live in their own dwellings. And those poor might as well demand, that those above them should not be better off than they are. In short, the feeling that would resist the conditions of domestic service, could not stop till it levelled all human conditions to literal equality. The rich man must part with his riches, the industrious with his gains, the advanced in life with the acquisitions of many years, that he may share his advantages with the young, the negligent, or the poor.

It appears to me, that any sensible young man or woman entering into life, may easily comprehend this argument; and if he does, let him patiently and cheerfully address himself to his task, as appointed to him by Providence. Let him endeavour so to discharge it, that the result in him shall be, not an irritated temper, a soured mind, an unfaithful practice, but that gentleness, kindness, and fidelity, that shall raise him above all human distinctions.

I must turn now to a consideration, more brief, indeed, of the artificial relations of society; and here, too, I shall confine myself to a single point—to the relations created in society by fashion. They are artificial, inasmuch as they are not founded on merit or mental culture, or even on wealth; nor are they required by the necessities of society; they are the ordinances, not of nature, but of caprice, pride, and ambition; they do not depend on different modes of living, because in this country, at least, the same conveniences, comforts, and elegancies, substantially, are found in different circles, and we *have* no idle class. They seem to depend, more than upon anything else, upon the determination of those who consider themselves as above, to keep down, and to keep out, those who are below. That refinement should shrink from vulgarity, and intelligence from ignorance, and sense from folly, I can understand, and understand to be reasonable; but whether these are the terms on which the fashionable classes, of this or any other country, stand towards the rest of the world, I leave you to judge. I confess that, to me, fashion seems to stand upon a much coarser and more worldly estimate of things than this.

It is difficult, I allow, to assign any law to its caprice. But that

which appears to me to go farther than anything else to explain its movements, changes, and vagaries, is the desire to escape from the (so called) vulgar multitude. The silly multitude strives hard to keep up with fashion in dress, equipage, etiquette, and modes of living; but the moment it comes in sight, that Proteus thing changes its form. The multitude comes up, and finds nothing but a tawdry and forsaken image. The spirit of fashion has taken another form. Wealth is the most favourite handmaid of fashion, as enabling it to make the most frequent and splendid changes, and as being itself, indeed, the distinction but of a few. If wealth could purchase the exclusive privilege of wearing coarse apparel, it would, doubtless, avail itself of the distinction. We see opulent fashion, indeed, in its fantasies, as it would seem, but really on principle, sometimes putting on coarse garments for the sake of a day's singularity.

This passion has led its votaries, in the great cities of Europe, to resort to a device, which there seems to be some disposition amongst ourselves, absurdly enough to copy; and that is the notable device of turning night into day. There the multitude cannot follow. Business must be done in the day-time. The idle and luxurious classes of Europe have, therefore, found at last a world for themselves. They have surrounded themselves with a wall of darkness; and they strive within it to make a day of their own which God has not made. But this violation of the laws of nature exacts of them sharp penalties. Disease lurks in the splendid purlieus of fashionable indulgence; and the dews of night penetrate their frames with aches and pains, that pay dear for hours of unnatural dissipation and excess. But that in a country which has no idle class, where all must do business, and where, too, the earlier hours of eating leave the body exhausted at late evening, and so demanding stimulants to support it—that, in such a country, and under such circumstances, this absurd practice should be gaining ground, is a striking proof to what lengths the folly of fashionable imitation will go.

It is on this account that I protest against the spirit of fashion. The spirit of fashion, I say; for I am less concerned with its particular arrangements. And when I speak of its spirit, let me not be understood to ascribe it to all the members of this class. I have lived too long to judge men by classes. I am far enough from saying, that all who belong to this class in particular, are heartless and insincere, or exclusive and proud. I am happy to know that the contrary is the fact.

But there is a spirit that is properly denominated the spirit of fashion. It is a spirit of exclusion; it is a spirit that wars against the great claims of humanity; it is a spirit that is haughty, cold, and unkind, to those who are deemed inferior; it does not regard their rights, interests, and feelings; it forgets that they are men.

It is on this account, on account of its essential inhumanity, that I regard that exclusiveness, which fashion has introduced, not into one circle only, but into the entire mass of society, as worthy of the severest reprehension. And when I say this exclusiveness, I do not speak of any particular rules of exclusion. Distinctions there must be, certainly; different circles, doubtless. Intimacies are to be forced upon no man. Every man has a right to accept such associates as he chooses. It is not of the particular arrangements of society that I now

speak, but of its general spirit, of the unchristian exclusion and scorn that prevail in it. And it is not purse-proud ignorance, or vulgar assumption alone, that is liable to this charge. It is not those only who treat those reputed to be beneath them with contempt, or speak to them in the tones of harsh authority. There are many who have too much good breeding and good sense to assume these rude manners, yet in whom the feeling of exclusion and superiority is just as strong. The veil of courtesy that is thrown over the feeling, does not at all diminish its power.

The claim to notice from such persons, is some distinction. It may be talent, it may be wealth, but it is, above all, the opinion of others; it is eclat in the eyes of the world—it is, especially, *belonging to a certain class in society*. There is an instinctive shrinking, as if from contagion, from all but this. There is a certain distinction, then; there is a charmed circle, within which the social exclusionist entrenches himself, and that circle is surrounded as if with an electric chain, which sends quick and thrilling sensibility through every part. But touch an individual in that circle—but mention his name, and the man or the woman we are speaking of feels it instantly; attention is on the alert; the ear is opened to every word; there is the utmost desire to know, or to seem to know, the individual in question;—there is an eagerness to talk about him, a lively interest in all that concerns him. Is he sick, or is he well? is he in this place, or in that place?—the most ordinary circumstances rise to great importance, the moment they are connected with him. But now, do you speak of a person *out* of that circle—be it of fashion, or birth, or wealth, or talent, or be it a circle composed of some or all of these: and suddenly the social exclusionist has passed through a total metamorphosis. He *says* not a *word*, perhaps; he settles the matter more briefly, and at less expense. His manner speaks. There is an absolute, an *un*speakable indifference. He knows nothing about persons of that class, who, alas! have nothing in this world to make them interesting, but their mind and heart. And if you speak of such an one, he opens his eyes upon you, as if he scarcely comprehended what part of the creation you are talking about. And when he is made, at length, to recognise a thing so unimportant as the concerns of a fellow-being, held to be inferior, you find that he is included, with a multitude of others, under the summary phrase of "those people," or "that sort of people;" and with such, you would find that he scarcely more acknowledges the tie of a common nature, than with the actually inferior beings of the animal creation.

This feeling of selfish and proud exclusion is confined to no one class. I wish we could say, that it is limited to any one grade of character. I wish we could say, that it did not infect the minds of many persons, otherwise of great merit and worth. I wish we could say, that any one is exempt from it. Living, growing up, as we all have been, in a selfish world, educated, more or less, by wordly maxims, we have none of us, perhaps, felt as we ought, the sacred claim of human nature; felt our minds thrill to its touch, as to an electric chain; felt ourselves bound with the bands of holy human sympathy; felt that all human thought, desire, want, weakness, hope, joy, and grief, were our own—ours to commune with and partake of. Few have felt this; for it is always the attribute of the holiest philanthropy, or of the loftiest genius.

Of the loftiest genius, I repeat; for I venture to say, that all such genius has ever been distinguished by its earnest sympathy and sacred interest in all human feeling. And why should we not feel it? The very dog that goes and lies down, and dies upon the grave of his master, will almost draw a tear from us, so near does he approach to human affection. And when the war-horse, that has carried his rider through many battles, bows his neck, and thrills through his whole frame, at the approach and touch of that master's hand, we feel something more than respect towards the noble animal. Oh, sacred humanity! how art thou dishonoured by thy children, when the merest appendage of thy condition, the mere brute companion of thy fortunes, is more regarded than thou!

What a picture does human society present to us! If I were to represent the world in vision, I should say, that I see it, not as that interchange of hill and dale, which now spreads around me, but as one vast mountain; and all the multitudes that cover it are struggling to rise; and those who, in my vision, seem to be above, instead of holding friendly intercourse with those who are below, are endeavouring all the while to look over them, or building barriers and fences to keep them down; and every lower grade is using the same treatment towards those who are beneath *them*, that they bitterly and scornfully complain of in those who are above; all but the topmost circle, imitators, as well as competitors, injuring as well as injured; and the topmost circle—with no more to gain, revelling or sleeping upon its perilous heights, or dizzy with its elevation—soon falls from its pinnacle of pride, giving place to others, who share, in constant succession, the same fate. Such is the miserable struggle of social ambition all the world over. And everything, I had almost said, is helping it on: everything, but the loftiest—I say not common—everything but the loftiest intellect, like that of Milton or of Shakspeare; everything but simple and holy religion, like that of the Gospel—but that religion which came to bless the poor and the broken in fortune, and the bruised in heart. These holier influences, alas! have as yet been comparatively but little felt. All else, I repeat, has helped on the evil strife—institutions, maxims, passions, the tone of education, the spirit of society; nay, even history, poetry, romance, the entire body of our literature has been prostituted to the unholy work. The image of human pride has been set up, like the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet, in the holy place; it has stood where it ought not—in the holy places of human nature: it has removed the altar where men ought to worship; it has overshadowed the paths of society; it has blighted the fruits of honest and ingenuous virtue; it has crushed many of the noblest and most generous affections of the human heart.

It is time that wise and good men, men who can afford to rest on their intrinsic dignity and worth, who, in imitation of the holy Master, are above the fear of being confounded with the mean and base, but not above the blessed labour of doing good to all, as they have opportunity—it is time that Christians, especially, the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, should see this subject in a new light. We talk about "ordinary people;" and this phrase, you will often hear pronounced in a tone the most self-sufficient and disdainful. Now, I shall venture to say, that in a most material, in *the* most material respect, *nobody is*

ordinary. Human nature is not an ordinary thing. That nature which is capable of knowledge, which can rise to heavenly virtue, which is destined to immortality, is not an ordinary thing, to be trampled down with a hasty footstep, or to be passed by with a tone or phrase of compendious scorn. There is many a work of *human* hands, that we should not treat in this manner. There are names of ancient genius, which bring a glow into the cheek as we mention them; and if the work of such an one was before us—if we saw the most common statue or monument that had come from the chisel of Phidias, or a faded cartoon from the pencil of Raphael, we should not contemptuously pronounce it an "ordinary thing." If we used the phrase at all, we should do it with a care and consideration, conveying the highest compliment. And are less care and consideration to be used, when we are speaking of the "offspring," the work, "the very image" of our Creator? I would not fastidiously restrict the freedom of colloquial language. But I do think it a serious question, whether any language, implying scorn of our fellow-beings, should be used without extreme caution and discrimination, and without a feeling of evident pity and regret, that a being so nobly gifted should so degrade himself. The meanest knave, the basest profligate, the reeling drunkard—what a picture does he present of a glorious nature in ruins! Let a tear fall as he passes. Let us blame and abhor, if we must, but let us reverence and pity still. What hopes are cast down! what powers are wasted! what means, what indefinite possibilities of improvement are turned into gloomy disappointment! what *is* the man, and what might he be? The very body, with its fine organization, with its wonderful workmanship, groans and sickens when it is made the instrument of base indulgence! The spirit sighs, in its secret places, over its meanness, its treachery and dishonour! There is a nobler mind in the degraded body, that retires within itself, and will not *look* through the dimmed eye, and will not *shine* in the bloated and stolid countenance: there is a holier conscience, that will not strengthen the arm that is stretched out to defraud—but sometimes makes that arm tremble with its paralysing touch, and sometimes shakes, as with thunder, the whole soul of the guilty transgressor!

But it is not so extreme a case that comes within the range of ordinary and practical consideration. You are surrounded with a mass of fellow-beings, most of whom have not lost the common and natural claims to respect. You have a wrong and unworthy pride (let him that heareth understand; let him that to whom this belongs receive it; I say not to whom, but without much fear of misapplication)—you have a wrong and unworthy pride, which leads you to pass by your inferiors, as you consider them, with cold neglect or slight, or to bestow upon them those patronising airs that are more difficult to bear; and I say that you degrade not others so much as you degrade yourself, by these manners. You show a mind bound up in worse than spiritual pride; that says, "stand by thyself, for I am—not holier, that were indeed a claim to respect, could it be sustained—but I am more fashionable than thou." You show that your mind has not been in the noblest school.

The celebrated Walter Scott has somewhere observed, in his popular works, that, in an ordinary ride in a stage-coach, he never found a man so dull, as not to communicate to him—if a free conversation were

opened—something which he would have been very sorry not to have heard. It was a noble observation; and the practice which it implied, no doubt, contributed much to that deep knowledge of human nature, for which this great author is so much distinguished.

But it is not as a fine sentiment, or as a useful maxim, that I urge this mutual respect. I say it is a duty. I will listen to no language of haughty pretension, or fastidious taste, or over-refined doubt; I say it is a duty. I say it is a duty, most especially binding on all Christians; yes, *binding* upon all who make any pretensions to a belief in the religion of Jesus Christ. And remember, too, my brethren, that it is a duty which will one day be felt, which will enforce conviction through sanctions more commanding, through a judgment more awful, than that of the sages, or the preachers of this world. There is an hour coming when all worldly distinctions shall vanish away; when splendid sin, with all its pride, shall sink prostrate and cowering before the eye of the eternal Judge; when the modest merit that it could not look upon here, nay, when the virtuous poverty, that was spurned from its gate, shall wear a crown of honour; when Dives shall lift up his eyes, being in torment, and Lazarus shall be borne in Abraham's bosom to the presence of the angels of God; when the great gulf which shall separate men from one another, shall separate not between outward splendour and meanness, but between inward, spiritual, essential purity and pollution. Let the judgment of that hour be our judgment now. That which will be true there, is true here—is true now. Let that severe and solemn discrimination find its way into *this* world. For it is written, "He that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

ON THE MORAL EVILS TO WHICH AMERICAN SOCIETY IS EXPOSED.

Acts xvii. 27: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth."

The principle of equality here stated, lies at the foundation of our political institutions. It is the first and main principle in our celebrated Declaration of Independence. I have heard some flippant disputers maintain, that that declaration is false; because, they say, men are, in fact, *not* "born equal." As if it could have been intended to assert, that all men are born with equal wit or wealth, or of equal strength or stature. The equality which we contend for in this country, is an equality, not of powers, but of rights. It is an equality before the law.

But this qualification being made, our assertion of the doctrine of equality is strong and emphatic. That which I have said in a former discourse is, in fact, a part of our political creed—"that, without any respect to external condition, one man has as much right to have his virtue and happiness regarded as another." The feeling which every human being entertains, that he has, in his welfare, as dear an interest at stake as any other man, is here perfectly respected. No man among us is allowed to say to any one of his fellow-citizens, "You are of a meaner class, and it matters little what becomes of you; you may be trodden under foot with impunity." The law spreads its protecting shield over the weakest and humblest man in the community, and it says to the highest and the haughtiest, "Thou shalt not touch a hair of his head, but by the judgment of his peers."

But the leading feature of our political condition is, that this law is ordained by the majority of the people. The law allows a certain freedom, and it imposes certain restrictions; but it is the majority that determines the extent of the one, and the limit of the other. This, I say, is the peculiar feature of our political condition. While, in most other countries, these points are determined by prescriptive usages, or by irresponsible orders of men, it is here left to the whole body of the people.

This state of things, of course, raises every individual in society to power and importance. Meanwhile, the collective body has already swept from its path all permanent hereditary distinctions. It has opened to merit a free course, by which it may rise to the highest places in society and government.

This principle of equality, thus obviously fitted to produce a direct and powerful effect on society, lends extraordinary force to another power of equal importance, in its bearing on our social character; and that is, the power of public opinion. Public opinion, in this country, is the aggregate of universal opinion. It is not the opinion of the rich and fashionable, nor of princes and nobles; it is the opinion of every-

body. It is the opinion of every body, and it affects every body. It is like suffrage, universal, and avoiding all distinction. It is like the atmosphere, it presses every man, and on every side; and, what is especially worthy of consideration, like the atmosphere, it leaves men unconscious of its power. You move your hand easily and freely in the air, though philosophers tell you, that the weight of the air is equal to fifteen pounds upon every square inch of it. Let a vacuum be made on one side of you, and that invisible force, of which you are so insensible, would hurl you to the earth as with a thunderbolt. It seldom happens, indeed, that a man is so circumstanced with regard to public opinion; and there is, too, a moral power which, against all opinion, can stand firm—"faithful found amidst the faithless." There is such a power, but few men are conscious on how many lesser occasions it is necessary to exert it; how liable they are to be, not crushed indeed, but swayed from their integrity and independence, by those potent influences, assent and dissent, praise and dispraise, flattery and ridicule; and, above all, by the breath of the boundless multitude—the mighty atmosphere of opinion that surrounds us! The effect of everything that is universal, is, in like manner, apt to be unperceived; and I think it the more important, therefore, to point out some of those dangers to our social character, which arise both from our equality, and from that public opinion to which it gives an almost despotic power.

I. And the first danger which I shall notice, and this arises particularly from our equality, is that of coldness and reserve in our manners.

I may observe here, in entering upon these details, that our exposures in the respects which I shall mention, are only such as appertain to *human nature* in such circumstances. Thus, with regard to this trait of reserve, I shall venture to lay it down as an unquestionable fact, that the progress of nations towards equality has always been marked by it. England has long been the freest country in Europe. Its manners are proverbial for their reserve. I do not deny that there are other causes for this, but I have no doubt that the rise of the lower classes in the scale of society, is one. Nay, and it is observable, that with the more rapid steps of reform, this reserve has been more rapidly gaining upon the English character. It is remarked, that the higher classes are more and more withdrawing themselves from the amusements and sports of the common people.

A writer * on the manners and customs of Spain, fifteen years ago, has, unintentionally, given a very striking illustration of the general position, on which I am insisting. "The line of distinction," he says, "between the *noblesse* and the unprivileged class being here drawn with the greatest precision, there cannot be a more disagreeable place for such as are, by education, above the lower ranks, yet have the misfortune of a plebeian birth." We shall immediately see the reason of this. "An honest respectable labourer," he says, "without ambition, yet with a conscious dignity of mind not uncommon among the Spanish peasantry, may, in this respect, well be an object of envy to many of his betters. Gentlemen treat them with a less haughty and distant air, than is used in England towards inferiors and dependants. A *rabadan* (chief shepherd), or an *aperador* (steward), is always indulged with a seat, when speaking on business with his master; and men of the first

* Doblado's Letters.

distinction will have a kind word for every peasant, when riding about the country. Yet they will exclude from their club and billiard table a well-educated man, because, forsooth, he has no legal title to a Don before his name."

The author here states important facts, but he does not give the reasons for them. Why, then, is it that the Spanish gentry treat their dependants with a less haughty and distant air, than the English? It is precisely because the line of distinction between them is drawn with the greatest exactness. And why is it, that those plebeians, who have the misfortune to be well-educated, are an exception to this liberal treatment! It is simply because, in cultivation and manners, they approach nearer to their superiors; it is because they have claims, which it is found necessary to resist by some means; and the natural barrier is reserve.

But in this country there is no other barrier. All the defences of birth and rank are broken down. Here, every man not only has claims, but claims which he is allowed freely to put forward. Hence, the guards against intrusion among us; the cautions and contrivances used to avoid intercourse with persons held to be inferior; the engagements pleaded, ay, and planned, to escape such fatal contact and contamination. Hence, the sensitive dread of being thought vulgar; and hence, for one reason, the decline of almost all the homely old domestic and village sports, lest they should bring with them that terrible opprobrium. An aristocratic state of society naturally produces courtesy, contentment, order; a republican, ambition, energy, improvement. I have seen a tree on the smooth and verdant lawn, which spread far its branches in unchallenged majesty to the sky, and whose outermost boughs nodded to the violets that grew by its side, and kissed the greensward beneath it, and in its shadow were the games and sports of a contented and cheerful peasantry; and I have seen a forest, whose intrusive underwood choked up the passages, and forced the loftier trees to stretch away from their companions, and tower up towards heaven; and there was neither space nor time there for games or sports.

This, no doubt, in the mouth of an adversary, would be thought a most invidious comparison. But I am prepared to accept the very ground on which it places us, and to defend it. If the agriculturist may hold it to be an advantage, that ten trees should grow where one grew before; surely, the humane political economist may value that condition which is favourable to the growth of men—to the growth of the many. So well am I satisfied with our institutions on this account, that I can afford to look fairly at the inconveniences and dangers that attend them. I trust, indeed, that much of the inconvenient under-*brush* will be cleared away from our paths, and that we shall see a fairer growth; in other words, that more perfect relations in society will spring up from the general and equal claims of all. In the meantime, we have less fawning and sycophancy among us than prevail in other countries. We have fewer parasitical plants in our forest state, than are found clinging around the oaks and elms of Europe. But it must not be denied, that we are sometimes chilled by the shadow of this thick growth of society; that we are too liable, each one to stand stiffly up for his rights; that we are liable to want gracefulness and amenity in our manners; that

we are exposed to have our hearts locked up in rigid and frozen reserve. A prince, or a nobleman, in a state of unbroken aristocracy, does not fear that his dignity or reputation will be compromised by the presence of an inferior in his house, or in his society. He is at ease on this point, because his claims stand on an independent basis; but with us, he who would hold a higher place, must obtain it from the general voice. He is dependant on suffrage as truly as the political aspirant. Hence, every circumstance affecting his position is important to him; and the circumstance that most immediately and obviously affects it, is the company he keeps. On this point, therefore, he is likely to be extremely jealous; and this, I conceive, to be one reason for the proverbial reserve of our national manners.

I have thus far endeavoured to unfold the danger on this point, to which I think that our situation exposes us. Let me now observe, that it is one of the most serious moral importance. There is an intimate connexion between the manners and feelings of a people. A cold demeanour, though it may not prove coldness of heart, tends to produce it. The feelings that are locked up in reserve are liable to wither and shrink, from simple disuse. He who stands in the attitude of perpetual resistance to the claims of others, is very apt to acquire a hardness and inhumanity towards them; he is liable to be cold, harsh, and ungracious, both in feeling and deportment; he is in the very school, not of generosity and love, but of selfishness, and scorn, and pride; and vainly might any Christian people boast of its intelligence, refinement, or freedom, if it fail thus of the essential virtues of the Christian religion.

The domestic affections are peculiarly liable to suffer under the same influence. "A poor relation,"—says an English writer, satirizing the manners of his countrymen—"is the most irrelevant thing in nature; a piece of impertinent correspondency; an odious approximation; a haunting conscience; a preposterous shadow, lengthening in the noontide of your prosperity; an unwelcome remembrancer; a perpetually recurring mortification; a drawback upon success; a rebuke to your rising; a mote in your eye; a triumph to your enemy; an apology to your friends."* Where, I was ready to say, but in England—but I will generalize the observation—where, but in countries that give birth and insecurity at once to individual aspirings, could such a satire have been framed? Not among the wild Highlanders of Scotland: not among the barbarous chieftains of our own native forests; not, I think, with the same force at least, in Germany, in France, in Spain, or in Italy. I will not undertake to say how far the satire applies to our own people; but this I say, that we are very liable to deserve it; and I would warn my countrymen, could I speak to them, against this odious and barbarous treatment of their poor, and depressed, or uncourtly relatives, as against a sin worse than sacrilege and blasphemy!

Religion, too, is liable to lose much of its expansion, generosity, and beauty, under the pressure of this national reserve. I have sometimes doubted whether a religion so cold, inaccessible, and repulsive, ever could have existed in any other country, as that which has prevailed in this. The manners of the country foster a peculiar reserve among us, an austerity, a sanctimoniousness, nowhere else to be found. The enthusiasm of the country, checked in every other direction, is checked in

* Elia.

this no less. The same fervour, the same freedom of action, will not be borne in our pulpit, that is welcome in most other countries. Ridicule—"the world's dread laugh"—is scarcely anywhere in the world so much feared as here; and the reason is, that here, the world—every body is judge. The preacher is begirt with a thousand critical eyes: he does not step forth from his lofty stall to his loftier pulpit, to address an ignorant multitude, as he might in Italy or Spain; but he stands up to address those who are to judge him; and not only to judge, but to award him life or death in his profession.

But not to wander from the point I have in view; I declare my conviction, that religion in this country has a peculiar hardness and repulsiveness; that it is not genial and gentle, gracious and tender, in the common administration of it; that it speaks, I do not say to heretics, but to the mass of the people, from the sealed up bosom of a more pitiless exclusion, than it does anywhere else in the world. The Church of Rome is, indeed, severe and exclusive towards heretics; but to its own people it is all graciousness and love, compared with the Puritan and Presbyterian forms of administration. Individual exceptions, of course, are always to be allowed in representations of this general character; but I hold that, in the main, the Protestantism of other countries—the Church of England, for instance, and the Lutheranism of Germany—are more genial; that they speak with a kinder tone to the people than the Protestantism of America. And the consequence is, that multitudes among us, and especially of the young, are more repelled from religion than the people of any other Christian nation. We are a very religious people, it is said, and it is true; so it would appear to the eye of a stranger; and the best foreign writer* who has visited us has said, that he never saw a people so religious; and yet I fear, that many among us are *very religious* who do not heartily *love* religion. But especially with regard to the young in this country, I am inclined to think that their state is, in this respect, very singular. It is not the want of religious affections and habits only; this, though it is to be regretted in all countries, is not peculiar to the young anywhere. But it is a state of the sentiments here, of which I speak. It is a feeling of strange and almost preternatural superstition about religion; a feeling, in the young, as if religion were shut up from them in seclusion and reserve; a feeling as if they had nothing to do with it. Why is this? Why, but because the clergy, in the first place, constitute a peculiar and reserved class—because they are guarded and sequestered from all the amusements of society, from almost all the scenes of cheerful, social enjoyment; and because, in the next place, professors of religion mostly are shut up in the iron mask of peculiarity, and communicate with the world, in their religious capacity, as it were, only through the bars of an ugly and distorting visor. And these two classes are considered as the representatives of all the religion of the country. How, then, can the young and unreflecting be expected to feel attracted to such a religion? Suppose that all the churches of a country were built in lonely places, like the shrine of Dodona; were set far apart from all human habitation, and were to be approached only by taking a painful pilgrimage, away from all the cheerful haunts of life: this would be only a visible, though, as I admit, a strong representation of the isolated

* De Toqueville.

and reserved character which religion has assumed among us. Suppose that all the clergy should put on sackcloth, and wear long, sad weeds, hanging from the head, the hands, the arms, and every part of their person, and should walk forth among the people with slow and melancholy steps, and an abstracted air; this, I say again, would be only a visible representation of the ideas with which a people may clothe the ministers of religion. And how far does the fact differ from the representation, when the sight of a clergyman at places of amusement, where everybody else may go with perfect propriety, would be accounted a kind of sacrilege, a desecration of his office! You may clothe a man with an intellectual costume, as repulsive as any visible costume. You may thus as truly make him a spectre and a bugbear to the young, as if you made him wear weeds and sackcloth. And if this man, the official representative of religion, is thus invested with a peculiarity, and forced into a solemn reserve, unknown in other countries—a reserve, especially, from most of the cheerful resorts and recreations of society; if he is seldom seen where men are gay and happy; and if, when he is seen, his presence lays an irksome restraint upon the company he visits, how is it surprising that our youth should feel that peculiar strangeness and alienation towards religion, of which I am speaking? Suppose that a father were to treat his children in this way; could they love him? I allow that in all these things, a gradual improvement is showing itself. But he cannot have looked deeply into the spirit of society around him, who does not yet see much to lament. And how saddening is the reflection, that at the very time when religion is wanted to mould, to soften, to control and satisfy the bursting affections of the heart—when youth is beginning to feel its nature's great want—when it is swayed by alternate enthusiasm and disappointment, and has not yet stepped deep into vice and worldliness; how lamentable that it should stand before the altar of religion, listening as to a cold stern oracle from a heathen shrine, instead of hearing the words, Abba, Father; instead of feeling that God is its father, and the Saviour its friend, and every Christian minister its brother!

II. But I must proceed to speak briefly of another trait of the social character, to which the state of political equality exposes us; and that is discontent. To this I may add, the danger of imprudent and extravagant expenditures.

But to speak distinctly of the feeling of discontent, in the first place; it may be observed that there is scarcely a limit among us to any man's aspirings: and yet, it is no more possible that all should be first in this country, than in any other. And the very circumstance that these aspirings are universal and importunate, creates among us, as I have said, a peculiar reaction. This demand on the one hand, and this resistance on the other, are likely, it is obvious, to give birth to an unusual and prevalent feeling of discontent.

Doubtless, the feeling prevails sufficiently in other countries: and it may be thought, since one class only, and that a small one, is elevated by birth and rank above the rest, that the feeling may have as full scope among their inferior circles, as it has among ourselves. But the truth is, that the existence of this class in those countries, gives a tone to the whole body of society. The distinction of classes is not an offence with them, as it would be with us. People there more willingly consent

to permanent inferiority. Men expect to live and die, in the condition of life in which they were born, and in the calling to which they have been brought up. The case with us is widely different; and the exposure to discontent is proportionably increased.

To exhibit the various forms which this trait assumes, would require the liberty of dramatic or fictitious writing. In the necessarily sober and didactic discussions of the pulpit, I can scarcely do more than refer you, for its existence, to your own consciousness or observation. I say, your observation; and yet, this is a feeling that so sedulously shrinks from notice, that you can hardly gain from that source any just idea of its prevalence and depth. Could I get an honest confession written out from the hearts of many around us, I have no doubt, that it would reveal an extent and poignancy of suffering from this cause, of which you may be little aware. For this conviction, I need only to be acquainted with the principles of human nature; I only need to know, that all men are made to desire the approbation and attention of one another; and then to know, that here are circumstances unusually fitted to afford expansion at once, and disappointment to this desire, in order to feel myself justified in making a very strong representation. Indeed, the indirect proofs of it, under the circumstances, are, perhaps, the clearest. As an author, by showing an apparent indifference to the success of his writings, commonly betrays, by that very manner, the keenest interest about it; so do I think that the coldness and hauteur of many persons towards their neighbours, leads to the same inference. They never speak of them, perhaps, for the very reason that they are always thinking about them; or they speak with guarded indifference, because they have something within them to guard. But not to rest on indirect disclosures, you must know that many of the dissensions, shall I say quarrels, of families, and many of the manifest jealousies and heart-burnings of society, arise from mortified pride. A man feels that he is not known to society as he ought to be, that he has not the acquaintances to which he is entitled; the fashionable reject him; or if he has gained that first-rate object, as it is usually considered, then there is a literary circle to which he does not belong; some exclusive circle there is, of some kind, to which he is not admitted; and he broods over it; he feels it; he thinks of it with ill-suppressed anger and vexation. He has got property or talent, perhaps, but he cannot get that for which, as one inducement, he sought property or distinction. In some minds, this is an honourable feeling, a just and reasonable desire for the acquaintance of congenial minds; but it is too apt to sink into the baser feeling of chagrin and spite.

It is not to be forgotten, in this connexion, that society does great wrong to many, and great injury to itself, by the neglect of merit. By a superficial estimate of the claims to notice, by bestowing its chief attention upon wealth, beauty, and the eclat of talent, rather than upon talent itself, and by setting up a standard of expense in its entertainments, which makes a considerable property a necessary passport to its advantages, society cuts off a great deal of worth, intelligence, and refinement, with which it can very ill afford to part. The simple entertainments, the intellectual *soirees* of the cultivated cities of Europe, open a door to merit that is nearly closed among us. It is the true policy of society to collect and concentrate, as much as possible, the

scattered rays of mental illumination. But if, instead of this, it goes about, virtually putting an extinguisher upon all the lights that are burning in silence and obscurity, instead of bringing them into notice, the loss is its own; and it is an irreparable loss. Mind is the only thing which it cannot afford to lose. Let the fashion of the country look to it, that it does not become degraded before the eyes of all the world, by this illiberal exclusion. Show me a society where wealth, dress, and equipage, are the chief titles to advancement; from which the great body of the educated, reading, and thinking men of the country are excluded, or choose to exclude themselves; and I shall not hesitate to say, that you show me a frivolous and vulgar society. Depend upon it, the conversation will become mean and insipid; and the manners will want the last graces of manner, ease, and simplicity. Intellect, cultivated and spiritualized intellect, is the only true refiner.

But I spoke, also, as connected with the worldly pride and discontent of society, of the temptations to imprudent and extravagant expense. In a state of society like ours, does not every one see, that these temptations are carried to the utmost length; that no condition of things on earth can, in this respect, more endanger the prudence and virtue of men? In regard to their expenses, men are apt to govern themselves by the consideration of what is proper to their condition, rank, or class in society. It is often a decisive argument for the purchase of a certain article of furniture or apparel, or for offering entertainments in a certain style, that others are doing the same thing. But what others? This question unfolds the peculiar temptation that besets us. Families, in this country, scarcely *have* any fixed and ascertained condition or rank. They are separated from each other, not by visible lines, but by imperceptible shades of distinction. In following others, they do not readily see where to stop. All, at the same time, are aspiring to a higher condition. And in the absence of hereditary distinctions, *the style of living* is too apt to be considered as the grand, visible index of that condition. The coat of arms is nothing; and it is the coat that a man wears that must mark him out. The hatchment has passed away from our house-fronts; those houses themselves, then, must set forth our respectability. In houses, therefore, in apparel, and in every species of expense, we are liable to go too far; to cross, one after another, the shadowy intervals that separate us from those who are above us in their means, and to be urged on to inconvenient and ruinous expenditures.

I think I have properly connected this topic, extravagance, with what I have said of the discontent of society. An irritated sense of inferiority, a diseased ambition, at once blinds and goads a man into the snares of rash expense and ruinous debt. It is often a word of discontent, pronounced in a domestic consultation, that decides the question; and carries a man to do what he feels to be unnecessary, and knows to be imprudent. He knows that it is rather beyond his means; but he hopes that his business will be prosperous, that his speculations will be fortunate; and he has, at least, the satisfaction of gratifying those who are dearest to him. His daughter *shall* have such and such decorations, his wife a certain equipage; others have them, and "they *must*." If those others were anybody in particular, and if anybody had a limit, the case would be better; but those others are everybody in their

sphere, that is a little beyond them. Thus a man enters upon the hazardous "experiment of living beyond the means"—of living upon resources that are not yet realized. For a while, the business of the country may be so prosperous as to bear him through all: but the times are likely to change; and the speculations that were to relieve, may become obligations that bind and fetter him: or, if not, yet the domestic ambition which, restrained by no definite rule, is for ever saying, "give, give," is likely to bring about the same result. The man is in debt; he is obliged to look in the face people, and perhaps poor people, whom he cannot pay. It is a situation infinitely irritating and mortifying. We are a people, I know, to a proverb, reckless of debt; reckless, at least, about plunging into it; but no man can be in it, and find the situation an easy one. No man can, without passing, I had almost said, through worse than purgatorial torments, become callous to the demand for payment. It turns the whole of life into a scene of misery and mortification; makes its whole business and action a series of sacrifices, and shifts, and subterfuges. Home itself—the last refuge of virtue and peace; the very home that has lost its independence in its splendour; that is not protected from the intrusive step and contemptuous tone of the unsatisfied creditor—has lost its charm. It is no longer a sanctuary; and is but too likely to be forsaken for other resorts. Many a man, not only in the city but in the country, has gone down in character and self-respect, in virtue and hope, under the accumulated weight of these overwhelming embarrassments.

Now I maintain, that in such a country as this, special guards are to be set up against discontent and extravagance. With regard to the last, let every man be resolute; let him firmly set his limit, and resolve to live far within the means. It is the only way to be happy in his condition, and, in fact, it is the only way to be honest. With regard to the first of these exposures, it is less easy to lay down any definite rule. We all desire the esteem of society; and its notice is the only visible mark of its esteem. Yet, let a man beware how he barters away for it the peace of his mind. Let him live *at home*, in his own bosom, and not abroad, in the thoughts of others. His mind must thus travel abroad sometimes no doubt; but let it *live* at home. Let it find content in self-culture, in the few fast and strong friendships, and, above all, in the resources of religion. Never, and nowhere perhaps, has the strong sentiment of religion been so necessary, in any age and in any country, as it is in this age and in this country.

III. But I must hasten to notice, in the last place, another exposure of the national character, and that is, to pusillanimity.

You will think, perhaps, as I offer this further consideration, and in such undisguised language, that I am the accuser of my country, rather than its defender. My answer is, as before, that I have such a calm and strong conviction of its merits and advantages, that I can afford to speak plainly of its dangers and faults. The irritable sensitiveness to blame amongst us, I hold, is not the true self-respect. And more than this; the errors to which we are exposed, *must* be fairly canvassed, frankly admitted, and fully corrected, that we may be justly entitled to our own respect, or that of other nations.

And now, I desire you to look at the exposure in question, and see if it is not peculiar; and so powerful, too, that a complete and immediate

escape from it would, in fact, have proved us more than human.—Every man in this country is dependent for his position upon public opinion. There is no exception. But in most other countries, there are many exceptions. In the first place, there is the class of nobles who hold their place by birth. In the next place, the clergy generally are presented to their livings, and are not dependent on the popular voice. Then there are a multitude of minor situations and offices, for which their incumbents are indebted, not to election, but to appointment. Even wealth, I think, holds a more independent position abroad than it does with us. This may be thought a surprising opinion; because it is constantly said, that where hereditary distinctions do not exist, wealth is apt to take their place, and to be more eagerly sought. It may be more eagerly sought; and yet it may have a less independent power when it is gained. Abroad, wealth shines by the reflected light of an opulent aristocracy. The possession of it is thus associated with the highest titles to respect and deference; and it is able, as an undoubted matter of fact, to command a deference and observance, which it never receives with us. It can speak to its dependants and agents there, as it does not here; and as, I trust, it never will. One of the most painful aspects of society abroad, is the cringing and fawning of so many worthy and intelligent men at the feet of rank and opulence.

But we, in this country, have our own dangers. And the greatest of all dangers here, as I conceive, is that of general pusillanimity, of moral cowardice, of losing a proper and manly independence of character. I think that I see something of this in our very manners, in the hesitation, the indirectness, the cautious and circuitous modes of speech, the eye asking assent before the tongue can finish its sentence. I think that in other countries you oftener meet with men, who stand manfully and boldly up, and deliver their opinion without asking or caring what you or others think about it. It may sometimes be rough and harsh; but, at any rate, it is independent. Observe, too, in how many relations, political, religious, and social, a man is liable to find bondage instead of freedom. If he wants office he must attach himself to a party, and then his eyes must be sealed in blindness, and his lips in silence, towards all the faults of his party. He *may* have his eyes open, and he may see much to condemn, but he must *say* nothing. If he edits a newspaper, his choice is often between bondage and beggary; that may actually be the choice, though he does not know it; he may be so complete a slave that he does not feel the chain; his passions may be so enlisted in the cause of his party, as to blind his discrimination, and destroy all comprehension and capability of independence. So it may be with the religious partisan. He knows, perhaps, that there are errors in his adopted creed, faults in his sect, fanaticism and extravagance in some of its measures. See if you get him to speak of them; see if you can get him to breathe a whisper of doubt. No, he is always believing. He has a convenient phrase that covers up all difficulties in his creed; he believes it "for *substance* of doctrine;" or, if he is a layman, perhaps he does not believe it at all. What, then, is his conclusion? Why, he has friends who do believe it; and he does not wish to offend them. And so he goes on, listening to what he does not believe; outwardly acquiescing, inwardly remonstrating; the slave of fear or fashion, never daring, not once in his life daring, to speak out and openly the thought

that is in him. Nay, he sees men suffering under the weight of public reprobation, for the open espousal of the very opinions *he* holds, and he has never the generosity or manliness to say, "*I* think so too." Nay, more; by the course he pursues, he is made to cast his stone, or he holds it in his hand at least, and lets another arm apply the force necessary to cast it at the very men who are suffering a sort of martyrdom *for his own faith!*

I am not now advocating any particular opinions; I am only advocating a manly freedom in the expression of those opinions, which a man does entertain. And if those opinions are unpopular, I hold that, in this country, there is so much the more need of an open and independent expression of them. Look at the case most seriously, I beseech you. What is ever to correct the faults of society, if nobody lifts his voice against them; if everybody goes on openly doing what everybody privately complains of; if all shrink behind the faint-hearted apology, that it would be over-bold in them to attempt any reform? What is to rebuke political time-serving, religious fanaticism, or social folly, if no one has the independence to protest against them? Look at it in a larger view. What barrier is there against the universal despotism of public opinion in this country, but individual freedom? Who is to stand up against it here, but the possessor of that lofty independence? There is no king, no sultan, no noble, no privileged class, nobody else to stand against it. If you yield this point, if you are for ever making compromises, if all men do this, if the entire policy of private life here is to escape opposition and reproach, everything will be swept beneath the popular wave. There will be no individuality, no hardihood, no high and stern resolve, no self-subsistence, no fearless dignity, no glorious manhood of mind, left among us. The holy heritage of our fathers' virtues will be trodden under foot, by their unworthy children. *They* feared not to stand up against kings, and nobles, and parliament, and people. Better did they account it, that their lonely bark should sweep the wide sea in freedom; happier were they, when their sail swelled to the storm of winter, than to be slaves in palaces of ease. Sweeter to their ear was the music of the gale that shrieked in their broken cordage, than the voice at home that said, "Submit, and you shall have rest." And when they reached this wild shore and built their altar, and knelt upon the frozen snow and the flinty rock to worship, they built that altar to freedom, to individual freedom, to freedom of conscience and opinion: and their noble prayer was, that their children might be thus free. Let their sons remember the prayer of their extremity, and the great bequest which their magnanimity has left us. Let them beware how they become entangled again in the yoke of bondage. Let the ministers at God's altar, let the guardians of the press, let all sober and thinking men, speak the thought that is in them. It is better to speak honest *error* than to suppress conscious truth. Smothered error is more dangerous than that which flames and burns out. But do I speak of danger? I know of but one thing safe in the universe, and that is truth; and I know of but one way to truth for an individual mind, and that is, unfettered thought; and I know but one path for the multitude to truth, and that is, thought freely expressed. Make of truth itself an altar of slavery, and guard it about with a mysterious shrine; bind thought as a victim upon it, and let the passions of the prejudiced mul-

titude minister fuel, and you sacrifice upon that accursed altar the hopes of the world.

Why is it, in fact, that the tone of morality in the high places of society is so lax and complaisant, but for want of the independent and indignant rebuke of society? There is reproach enough poured upon the drunkenness, debauchery, and dishonesty of the poor man. The good people who go to him can speak plainly—ay, very plainly—of his evil ways. Why is it, then, that fashionable vice is able to hold up its head, and sometimes to occupy the front ranks of society? It is, because respectable persons, of hesitating and compromising virtue, keep it in countenance. It is, because timid woman stretches out her hand to the man whom she knows to be the deadliest enemy of morality and of her sex, while she turns a cold eye upon the victims he has ruined. It is, because there is nobody to speak plainly in cases like these. And do you think that society is ever to be regenerated or purified under the influence of these unjust and pusillanimous compromises? I tell you never. So long as vice is suffered to be fashionable and respectable, so long as men are bold to condemn it only when it is clothed in rags, there will never be any radical improvement. You may multiply Temperance Societies, and Moral Reform Societies; you may pile up statute books of laws against gambling and dishonesty; but so long as the timid homages of the fair and honoured are paid to splendid iniquity, it will be all in vain. So long will it be felt, that the voice of the world is not against the sinner, but against the sinner's garb. And so long, every weapon of association, and every baton of office, will be but a missile feather against the Leviathan that is wallowing in the low marshes and stagnant pools of society.

Would that the world were changed, we say: but how is it to be changed? Would that the evils and vices of society were done away: but how are they to be done away? Whence is the power to come? I answer: One fearless voice—that of Luther—broke up the spiritual despotism of centuries: one fearless voice in England—that of Hampden—shook the throne of corruption to its base. Any one human arm, lifted up in indignant rebuke, is clothed by the power of God with all-conquering might. The popular mind ever wants leaders. The people want that some one should interpret the voice that is in them—should speak the commanding word that marshals the hosts of society to the work of reform. If there shall be no such voices in this country, no lofty seers, no stern prophets; if all shall basely seek to lose themselves in the multitude, then shall the sluggish wave of mean mediocrity and slavish acquiescence roll over the land, giving birth to broods of serpents and reptiles; and it shall only fatten the soil for some other and future empire, of more generous freedom, and more magnanimous virtue. So sunk the glorious land of Grecian liberty, when nothing but cowering flattery would suit the people; temples, and statues, and thrones went down, bemired and trodden under the feet of its "fierce" and flattered "democracies;" and the vision of Plato's republic lingers only as a bright dream upon its beautiful shores. If that vision, or any part of it, is ever to be realized here, there must be a genial confidence and warmth breathed into the soul of the people; there must be a noble simplicity and self-respect free from all base discontents; and there must be a lofty magnanimity free from all time-serving and slavish fear.

ON ASSOCIATIONS.

GALATIANS v. 1: "And be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

IN the close of my last discourse, I considered the tendency of a controlling public opinion to abridge private and personal independence. The subject appears to me of such importance, that I am induced to resume the discussion of it. The general effect of public opinion, otherwise sufficiently great, is increased, I believe, to an unsuspected extent, by the principle of association: and it is this which I wish particularly to consider in the present discourse.

I have lately ventured to say, that the great danger to our national character is, that of wanting personal, individual independence—independence of mind; and I have once, in another form of communication to the public, expressed the opinion, that, "there is less private and social freedom in America than there is in Europe."

A striking confirmation of these views I have lately met with, in the intelligent French traveller, de Tocqueville; a man remarkably qualified by previous study, by singular candour, and by a thorough investigation of the subject, to write on this country. "I am not acquainted," he says, "with any country, in which there is so little true independence of mind, and so little freedom of discussion, as in America. The authority of a king," he continues, "is purely physical; it controls the actions of the subject, without subduing his private will; but the majority in America is invested with a power which is physical and moral at the same time; it acts upon the will, as well as upon the actions of men, and represses, not only all contest, but all controversy."

Though the result is too strongly expressed, especially in the last clause of this passage, yet the tendency is unquestionable; and it being so, I hold that public opinion is more than sufficiently strong, without any artificial aids or arrangements, to give it greater power. That the majority shall rule, is the chosen and comprehensive principle that lies at the foundation of our political institutions. Under such an administration of things, there is no reason to fear that public opinion will be too weak; that majorities will be too timid and scrupulous. On the contrary, the danger is, that individuals will lose all courage and independence; that all individual opinion will be merged in prevailing opinion; that intellect and virtue together will sink to an all-levelling tameness and mediocrity. The danger, I repeat, however little it may have been anticipated or suspected is, that the very principle of our freedom—the rule of majorities—will "entangle us again with the yoke of bondage." In such circumstances I insist, that all artificial aids and arrangements, which give force to public opinion, are to be looked upon

with jealousy, and that their efforts are to be guarded against, on the part of individuals, with strenuous resistance; and by artificial arrangements, I mean all those parties, sects, and associations, whose tendency it is to invade or abridge personal freedom.

But it is necessary, before I proceed farther, to say something definitely of the principle of association; to say, in other words, how far and for what reasons it is to be resisted or restrained.

That principle has had, in this country, a most extraordinary development. It is the very country of parties, sects, and societies. But to consider the latter particularly, as being most remarkable: it would seem as if nothing could be done in this country but by societies; and wo to the man, claiming any place among the *good* men of the country, who thinks to escape them! Wo to him, who thought to stand apart and aloof, and to go to his grave, quietly and alone! Some society will be certain to find and ferret him out, and bring him into the great trained bands of benevolence, that are spreading themselves over the country.

It would be curious, if not useful, to inquire into the causes of this singular social movement of the country. It arises in part, doubtless, from the popular character of our institutions. It has been the fashion abroad, for governments to do everything for the people. It is the tendency of our political forms to make the people do everything for themselves. Besides, the pervading intellectual activity of this country leads the people to take an interest in everything that is going forward, which is not found to an equal extent in any other. This interest, perhaps, naturally expresses itself in associations; since associated action is obviously more powerful than any other mode of operation. But I am inclined to think, that the very trait of national character on which I have lately commented, has had something to do with the multiplicity of our associations. They enable the individual to shrink from responsibility, and to lose himself in the crowd: they are convenient entrenchments to shelter the timid and faint-hearted. If a man wishes to advocate or advance an unpopular measure, and has not moral strength enough to stand alone, a society offers to him the very resource he wants; then there is a body of associates to lean upon, and to divide with him the risk and opprobrium.

And yet I do not deny that societies have their use; and I am inclined to say, that it is in this very emergency that they have their use and scope. An unpopular opinion or doctrine may well gather its friends about it, if it has any; an aggrieved minority may well associate for its own defence. It is the very policy of our social condition to give to remonstrance, strength; but the same policy requires that the principle of association should be limited by that consideration. If this were a proper subject for legislation, and the power of enacting such a rule were given me, I would cause every association, whose object it is to operate upon public opinion, to die the moment it reached the point of predominant influence; success should dissolve it. Public opinion wants no such aid to make it strong; it is too strong already.

But we must further distinguish. There are societies whose main purpose is to produce an effect upon public opinion. Such were the Anti-masonic, and are now, the Temperance and Abolition Societies; and such are all political associations and parties. Upon all such com-

binations, I should look with jealousy. In this remark, I do not intend to pronounce any judgment upon their particular objects. I might approve of them; but I should be on that account none the less jealous of their tendency, when successful, to narrow and enslave the minds of individuals. Then, again, there are other associations, whose object is charity, or to do some good work; such as Bible, Tract, Missionary, and Relief Societies of various sorts. With regard to these, it appears to me, that a different judgment is to be entertained. Their object being simply charitable, is so far unexceptionable, let it be carried as far as it will. But this I should say, that while their success is no ground for apprehension, while their success, to almost any assignable extent, is to be desired, their coercive influence upon individual minds is no less to be guarded against.

In fine, I do not say that societies, *as* societies, are to be opposed.—Were it even desirable, it is certainly impossible, in this country at least, by any such weak means or arguments, to check or discourage the spirit of association. It is in the very air about us, ready to come at every call, and to take some new form every day; and no power at our command can exorcise it. This is all, then, that I say, and this is the ground I take: that all societies ought to beware how they unduly press their influence upon individual minds, and that every individual is to be exhorted to guard his freedom against them: to be exhorted, not, indeed, to withhold his countenance and aid, but to limit them exactly to his independent convictions. He is to be warned, I say, not against liberality, but against bondage, and societies are to be warned against imposing it.

Some of the cases in which this injury is both done and suffered, it shall now be my business to point out; and then I shall proceed to consider their general influence upon the intellect and virtue of society.

Thus with regard to the cases—when a political party says to its members, "You shall support everything, and oppose nothing, that is done among us, or else expect no favour or office at our hands," what is this but an enactment in a code of slavery? And what can its legitimate effect be, but to make slaves? Doubtless, a man may honestly and honourably attach himself to some particular doctrine in politics; and on that basis, a party may be formed; and if the party confined itself to the support of that or similar, or associated doctrines, or of any *doctrines* in fact, all might be well. There would not necessarily be any bondage in such an adherence to party. But the evil is, that the little circle of individual and independent opinions, which at first was calmly gathering and slowly revolving about its proper centre, soon increases to a whirlwind, and raises a cloud of dust, and takes up straws and rubbish in its course, and sweeps everything in its train. A man finds himself, ere long, mixed up with the agitated and irregular action of many things altogether irrelevant to the original questions. If it were only a certain measure, or set of measures, that he was pledged to support, he might be free; therein he might act upon his own independent opinion: but he soon finds that other questions and interests are thrust into the case; that he must help to compass party ends; and, hardest of all, that he must support party leaders. Folly must become wisdom to him, if it is found in the party idol; every political vice, a virtue; incapacity, honest, homely sense, unpractised in the tricks of office;

intrigue, prudence; sycophancy to the multitude, the love of the people; the most tortuous policy, straight-forward integrity. Let it not be thought that I overdraw the picture. If any man will think to be independent of these considerations, let him try it. Let him dare to say, what, if he has any sense or candour, it is probable that he honestly thinks; let him say, that, although he approves the general object of his party, there are some of its measures that he cannot approve, and some of its men that he will not support. Let him do this, and he will find that the batteries of a hundred presses are immediately opened upon him. He is denounced as a false friend, a spy in the camp; he could hardly be a worse man, if he meditated treason to his party, or to his country; and the end of this experiment on party toleration is, that he is flung off, and left to struggle alone, in the wake of the great ship that has borne his friends to their haven.

With regard to those great associations denominated religious sects, I fear that the case involves no less peril to the mental independence of our people. I allow, that the multiplicity of sects in this country is some bond for their mutual forbearance and freedom: but the strength and repose of a great establishment are, in some respects, more favourable to private liberty. If less favour is shown to those without, there is usually more liberality to those within it. It is in the protected soil of great establishments, that the germs of every great reform in the church have quietly taken root. For myself, if I were ever to permit my liberty to be compromised by such considerations, I would rather take my chance in the bosom of a great national religion, than amidst the jealous eyes of small and contending sects. And I think it will be found, that a more liberal and catholic theology has always pervaded establishments, than the bodies of dissenters from them. Nay, I much doubt, whether intolerance itself, in such countries—in England and Germany for instance—has ever gone to the length of Jewish and Samaritan exclusion that has sometimes been witnessed among us.

In saying this, I am not the enemy of dissent; nor do I deny that it is often the offspring of freedom. It certainly is the usual condition of progress. But this, I say, that dissent sometimes binds stronger chains than it broke. And this is especially apt to be the case for a time, when several rival and contending sects spring from the general freedom. Then the parent principle is often devoured by its own children.

But there are other associations to be noticed in this connection.—The great benevolent societies of the day, however much good they may propose, and may actually do, are liable to do this evil—to give, that is to say, a form to public opinion, which shall make it press too hard upon individual freedom.

This may be less felt in cities. Individuals there are lost in the crowd, and possess a certain freedom in their comparative insignificance. The many and conflicting claims to public attention in cities, also make each particular claim to be less distinct and imposing; and the heterogeneous mass of mind collected in them, enables every dissentient or opposing opinion to draw forth strength and courage for its support.—Hence, I believe, it will be found, that all great reforms, political, religious, or social, have commenced in cities. Hence it is, that cities have ever been the strongholds of freedom; and, if I should add, its corrupters also, I should only point out an extension of the same principle;

that is, freedom becomes licentiousness. And thus it is, at this moment, in our American cities, that we have at once more freedom of mind, and more licentiousness of opinion, than there is in the country. Still, amidst all this, there is, no doubt, enough and too much of bondage among us.

But if you would know how great associations may invade the freedom of individuals, go with one of their agents to some retired village or township in the country. His object is to form a Missionary, Tract, or Temperance Society. He first approaches the clergyman, and finds him, perhaps, a convert already to the project: but if not, he is but too likely to find in him an instance of timid and pitiable vacillation; a person unwilling to express that decided opinion, or that decided doubt about the plan, that becomes his place. Next, the agent, with or without the support of the pastor, applies himself to the church and the people. And here, of course, there will be a certain amount of objection. There will be those who think that they cannot afford the money required, or who prefer some other plan, or who dislike pledges. How are these feelings of objection treated? Does the applicant for aid respect them? Is he anxious that every man should act freely, upon his own individual and unbiassed conviction? Does he remember, that "God loveth a cheerful giver," and no other? How much more likely is he to bring the whole weight of public opinion to bear upon the case; to content himself, if he can wring forth reluctant assent! His own reputation is, in a measure, involved. A society of ten or twenty will not satisfy him. It is very likely that these are the only numbers, which, on any new proposition, would justly express the state of the public mind; but these will not content him. He wants a hundred members. He would fain *press* men into the cause. Even if this were not the case, if he were ever so scrupulous about the motives he employed, yet the bare fact, that he comes backed by the example of a thousand villages, of almost the entire country in fact, will be likely enough to leave little enough freedom among the people he addresses. Shall they stand up against the whole world? Shall all be darkness and death among them, while all is life and brightness around them? What a sad report to go forth among the churches, that no Missionary Society, no Tract Society, no Temperance Society, could be formed there? What will people think of that congregation, or of its pastor? What can they think, but that they are all sunk in spiritual death, or else are opposed to all truth and righteousness? This will not do; there must be a society; they cannot go on without one. I am not denying, of course, that better feelings have their share in the result; but I wish to show you, how liable these bad, unworthy, and slavish feelings, are to have place in it.

But I need not confine myself, in this survey, to any locality. Every one must be aware, that with regard to several of the great moral enterprises of the day, there is, in this country, a considerable mass of dissent. Take, for instance, the Temperance Reform. I have no doubt that I might express the opinion of a multitude of sober and reflecting men in the country, in terms like these: "that there was, indeed, great and crying need of this reform; that the evil was one of tremendous magnitude; that it was meet the whole country should be aroused to its danger; that a pledge of abstinence might have been

advisable as a temporary expedient to give form and force to that strong protest, which was rising in the public mind; but that the pledge, as it has actually been framed, is based upon a false principle; that what the temperance reformers say, when they assert that it is a sin *per se* to take any substance or liquid in which alcohol is mingled, is not true; that it is altogether an unwarrantable and mischievous refining upon the case, so to state the doctrine of temperance; that there is alcohol in everything, as there is an exciting quality in everything, even in the simplest food; that gluttony is as bad as intemperance, though not so common, but that it does not follow that men should not eat; that the proscription of wine, and the sacrilegious and most gratuitous disputes about the use of that element in the Lord's supper, are really as legitimate as they are hurtful inferences from a false principle; because, if alcohol may not be drank, then wine may not be drank; and if it is a sin to drink wine, then it ought not to be used in the Communion; and, finally, that no good is ultimately to be expected, but only a sad reaction from the propagation of any error. Warn the public mind," they would say; "alarm it as much as possible; but do this by legitimate considerations; none other are needed, and none other can do any eventual good." There are many, I say, who entertain these views: but where, I had almost said, is the speech, sermon, or newspaper, that has ever given one single solitary expression to them? And the consequence has been, that the Temperance Reform has gone on without that open and frank opposition to keep it judicious and right, which is necessary to all human action, to every government, to every mind in fact, and therefore, especially, to every heterogeneous and irresponsible association.

Every great association, if it were wise, would welcome an honest, intellectual, argumentative opposition. This is precisely what it wants to preserve it from that extravagance, to which the fervour and confidence of united action are ever apt to lead. But the evil is, that every such association, in proportion as it grows strong, silences remonstrance. It is not here as in politics, where interest insures an opposition. Men feel no immediate interest in resisting any enterprise of a moral nature; and, therefore, they are apt to content themselves with expressing their objections in private, and they leave the multitude to rush on without control. But I predict that the day will come, when reflecting men will find, if they would preserve any personal influence or independence, that they have a duty to perform, widely at variance with their present supine indifference or shrinking timidity. Nay, to some, has not the time already come? Have you never known a man in the country, of somewhat conspicuous standing, of unexceptionable morals and many virtues, but who gave nothing to missionary societies, nothing to tract societies, nothing to education societies, and who would sign no pledges to temperance associations, or to associations for promoting the observance of the Sabbath? What is the position of that man in his neighbourhood? Why, he is "a great opposer;"—brief, but significant and comprehensive phrase, which none but they who have observed its effect can understand. It draws a mysterious circle around its object; the very children of the neighbourhood come to regard him as a strange and bad man—they know not why; he is cut off from the sympathies of the world around him; kept aloof (and well if he is not made a

misanthrope), mentioned to strangers with disparagement, prayed for in meetings, and sent to his grave, unblessed, lonely, and perhaps sad at heart. His very family, it may be, and especially the female members of it, who are more susceptible to the influence of public opinion, are brought over to the side of distrust and suspicion. Stand up for him, fair ministers, at the altar of domestic love, and sacrifice him not on *that* altar! I am not now saying, that the principles he has adopted with regard to societies is right; but this I do say, that for public sentiment to visit upon him such calamities for his dissent, is an insufferable presumption, and ought to bring the power of associations under the most jealous watch of a free people.

But here are other dangers, besides that of producing individual suffering and bondage, which should lead us carefully to guard against the uncontrolled influence and tendency of associations.

And here I must desire you to observe, that it is not against associations as such, that I am directing these observations, nor against them altogether. It is with no hostility to societies, that I am pointing out some of their incidental effects upon the public mind. The best things are liable, by abuse, or by an oversight of their injurious tendencies, to become the worst; and this *because* they are the best; because they win unbounded confidence. Moral associations are such good things—they are so humane and benevolent, they engage such pious and excellent people in their measures—that it is scarcely possible to think any evil of them. So, also, is public opinion a good thing. An enlightened public opinion is to do more, perhaps, than any other agent, except truth itself, to reform the world. But still it is obvious, that this same power may, in certain circumstances, become an instrument of bondage. That it is liable to be such in this country, I think, will scarcely be denied. I say, then, that it is not against associations as such, but against associations, as auxiliaries of a public opinion already too strong, that I would put you on your guard. I have said that public opinion is like the atmosphere, surrounding and pressing upon every man in the country. Associations may be compared to the atmosphere put in motion; they sweep across a country like the trade-winds or monsoons. Nay, and it may be the sun of truth, pouring its rays upon a certain portion of the firmament, that sets in motion those trade-winds of society, associations. It is the sun of truth, I think, that has set in motion the moral elements of the abolition societies; and yet they may rise and swell, till they bring wreck and ruin upon the dearest interests of the country. I say it was the sun of truth, and I will explain my meaning. The abolition societies began, I believe, in a just and generous impulse. *It is true* that human beings ought not to be bought, or sold, or held in bondage. The only question is, about a practicable and wise measure of relief, from the evil and wrong that is done. But not only have abolitionists failed, in my opinion, to offer any such measure; but what it particularly falls in with my design to observe is, that the excitement, if it increases, threatens to be one of the most alarming character. You perceive, already, how fearfully it is mixing itself up with the politics of the country.

Indeed, this is one of the general dangers which I was about to notice. Every association among us, and especially every one that is designed to operate upon public opinion, is liable to take on a political

character. It may begin in a very simple intention; it may be conducted for a while with great singleness of purpose; but ere long it is likely to feel the impulse which, in this country, is hurrying everything to the ballot-box. That is the real source of power; and honest men, who find themselves unable speedily enough to accomplish their purposes by any other means, may be so far wrested from their simplicity, as to be willing to bring their cause to that dangerous ordeal. Or even if they retain their simplicity, elements may mingle with their enterprise which they did not seek; and they may discover at last, that, in the array of their numbers, they have only raised up an army, convenient and ready to the hand of some artful demagogue. The party leader will smile in himself at their zeal, and use their services; and they will find, like the Independents and Roundheads in the time of the second Charles, that they have been deceived and betrayed.

Another danger from the sway of public opinion, and especially of associations, is that of narrowing and prostrating the intellect of the country. It has been maintained by a modern French historian,* that the free action and rapid progress of the body of the people, is unfavourable to the production of great men; that the nurturing of great minds needs leisure, repose, a fixed order of things, freeing them from the distraction of surrounding events. This opinion, though it obviously requires many qualifications, has a certain plausibility; and it suggests the inquiry, whether the ratio of individual greatness among us, has not decreased with the general advancement of society. One thing, at any rate, is certain, that mind cannot grow but in freedom; it must be bold, fearless, independent, or it cannot rise: but the tendency of an overwhelming public opinion, is to make it timid and time-serving. The multiplicity of associations increases this effect: it multiplies the questions on which it is dangerous or disagreeable to speak plainly. One can scarcely speak on any subject now, but there is some adherent of some society or some party present, to be wounded or offended by his freedom. Really, we are tempted to say, that something must be done, some compact formed, some new freedom obtained in society, or all liberty of general conversation will sink into whispers and inuendoes. Besides, associations naturally tend, not only to restrain general freedom of mind, but to narrow and contract the views of their votaries. Opinion naturally loses expansion and freedom amidst the action and pressure of an association. A pledge, or a test, must be brief and general; and is likely to sacrifice truth as well as freedom, in the cautious and politic terms with which it must be announced. Associations are scarce likely to be the school of philosophy, still less of a philosophical spirit. A votary is apt to think that there is no plan like his plan; every plan must yield to it, all means flow to it, all voices be secured for it. He would gladly forestall all that ministers to the decoration of life, and turn it into his treasury. He will not look with a wide and comprehensive survey upon life, and see how many and varied are the means that contribute to its welfare. With him there is but one thing in the world, and that is the Missions, or the Education Society, or the Poor's Fund, or the Ministry for the Poor.

Finally; there are moral dangers of a general nature, arising from

* Guizot.

that concentrated action of public opinion, which is witnessed in associations. There is danger that virtue will lose something, and not a little, of its manliness, simplicity, and spontaneity; that men will be more attentive to outward appearances than to inward qualities; more religious than good, more correct than virtuous, more charitable than generous, and more strict than pure.

It is said that intemperance has decreased in this country. Is it an honest, and not an enforced reform? Has no evasion, concealment, or hypocrisy, resulted from the mode in which this enterprise has been carried forward? The very history of the temperance pledges, shows that there is such a danger. At first, they contained a promise of abstinence from spirituous drink, except when they were used as medicine: but it soon appeared that it was not safe to leave this qualification in the hands of the people, and the prescription of a physician was required. But as a single prescription of this kind might spread license over a man's whole life, it was found necessary to restrict his use to the single instance prescribed for. Then, again, abuses crept in, under the disguises, the new and false appellations, which spirituous drinks received; till, at length, no barrier against hypocrisy could be framed but an unqualified pledge of total abstinence from everything that can intoxicate. This is throughout a history of evasions; and it should admonish the temperance societies to beware how they press assent beyond conviction; to beware, lest they make men the slaves of opinion, rather than willing subjects of the law of conscience.

Again; the charities of our people, their contributions to the various benevolent enterprises of the day, are immense and unexampled. I rejoice to see it; I wish they were doubled; they ought to be doubled, at least on the part of the rich. But while I yield my sympathy and admiration to the spectacle of a great people rising up with associated power, to fulfil its duties to the poor and neglected, and to the heathen, I cannot help charging it upon this people, to see that its charities be really pure and generous. I must confess, that I look with some doubt and pain upon the moral administration of this business of soliciting charities. I fear that there is no delicate or proper regard paid to the freedom and conscience of the giver; that all sorts of influences are, too often, unscrupulously brought to bear on him, and to wrest from him a reluctant donation. A great association, when it presents itself before an individual, may very properly urge upon him his duties; but let it not urge its own authority, or the universal example, to induce him to do that which he is not, in his own mind and conscience, prepared and ready to do. I once knew the agent of a religious charity to receive this answer from the person applied to: "I shall give, because you have asked me, but not because I wish to give, or because I take any interest in your object." "Then, sir," was the reply, "I cannot receive your donation." The answer was right. Any other ground is degrading both to the giver and receiver. But I fear that this is not the ground usually taken by the solicitors of charity. I must confess, that I have never heard of another instance, yet I would hope, for the honour of our national liberality, that it is not rare. Charity loses all its sublimity and beauty the moment it ceases to be voluntary and free. There are miseries enough, God knoweth, and man may see, to touch our hearts with unforced pity. There are wastes of ignorance spread-

ing far and wide; there are vices whelming thousands in wo and shame; there are victims of penury and guilt sighing in ten thousand dwellings all around us. Let then charity stand forward to relieve, with pitying heart and open hand, and not with an iron palm, half closed by a feeling baser than avarice, and doling out just so much as will maintain its reputation. Odious gifts, that profane the name of mercy! not, if so I could fill a thousand treasuries, would I touch one of them. Dishonoured would be the very glory of a nation's benevolence, if its gifts are cankered, if its fountains are poisoned, by that taint of slavish homage to public opinion.

Do you ask, in fine, why I lay such stress on this point—freedom? This is my answer; and my apology, if any be needed, for occupying so much attention with this point. I know of no intellect worth possessing, without freedom. I know of no virtue worth the name, without freedom. A mind chained, a virtue enforced, lose entirely their proper character: they are no longer mind and virtue. But mind and virtue are the only enduring treasures of individuals or of nations. You may present to me the picture of boundless physical prosperity, but if these are gone, all is gone. An iron materialism will press, like incumbent fate, upon the heart of the nation; and quench for ever the hope and heroism, the light and glory, of the country! You may tell me of free institutions, and they may be your boast; you may tell me of suffrage and the ballot, of the constitution and the laws; unreal mockery is it all, if there is not a free mind and a free heart in the people! A temple of freedom, fair and majestic as the dreams of philosophy or poetry ever fancied, may be built on these shores; but if slaves walk beneath it, if the very ministers at its altars are held in abject bondage to those tyrants of the spirit, fear and opinion,—what will it be, but a temple deserted of its Divinity! what will it be but the great tomb of Liberty!

ON SOCIAL AMBITION

Mark ix. 34: "By the way, they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest."

This dispute is not yet ended. And as Jesus reasoned with it in the case referred to in our text, and in many others, so do I conceive that this questioning of the mind about worldly distinctions, still needs to be reasoned with. Nay, the progress of modern society is daily furnishing additional occasion for the argument.

There are, indeed, many and high reasonings required to meet the exigencies of modern civilization. Questions concerning governments, concerning the balance of political powers, concerning the rights that are to be acknowledged, and the restraints that are to be enforced, are spreading themselves among all reading and reflecting persons throughout the civilized world. Thinking men, in an age like this, must think about questions such as these. Nor is it an easy, nor would it be a thankless task to solve them. But I confess that I should yet be more grateful to him, who would answer satisfactorily all the questions that arise concerning the social relationship of man to man; and who could effectually teach men to dwell together, not merely as brethren in equality, but as brethren in spite of inequality. This is, indeed, a larger theme than I propose now to discuss. It would involve an inquiry into the manners of society, into the manners of different classes towards each other, not only transcending my present limits, but requiring, perhaps, greater freedom of treatment than public discourse allows for its proper illustration.

I shall invite your attention, at present, to a single point—social ambition, and the spirit with which its trials are to be met.

Why, let us ask, in the first place, is such a field opened in life for the display of this passion? Between creatures of the same birth, of the same soul and faculty, and, especially, of the same passion for the notice and admiration of their fellows, why, in general, are such immense distinctions permitted? Why is one clothed with purple and fine linen, and why fareth he sumptuously every day, while his brother-man sitteth by his gate in rags, and beggary? Why does one stand in the cold shadow of neglect, while another passes by amidst throng, and shout, and festal splendour? Why do such extremes of power and weakness present themselves in the form of our common humanity? Why is it so ordained that a man, ay, and many a man, is obliged to say this, —"I am as industrious and honest, I am as rich and wise as my neighbour, and, perchance, no worse; and yet it availeth me not; I have striven hard for a place in the world and in society, and yet, mere birth or connexions, or fortuitous fashion, or clanship, social or political, gives that to another, which I cannot obtain"? In short, for nature's

craving approbation and regard, and the visible expression of those sentiments, why is a condition of things ordained, which constantly disappoints this passion, and often unjustly?

To such questioning I know it is common to reply, that difference of situation gives occasion for the exercise of various social virtues; that for man, if there were none above him, there would be no call for reverence; if none below, there would be no opportunity for condescension and forbearance; that without power, there could not be protection, nor submission without dependence; that riches and poverty are appointed spheres—the one for generosity, the other for gratitude. Now, with this answer, I confess I am not satisfied. To those who stand in higher situations, it may, no doubt, be very acceptable doctrine; but I scarcely think it can be, or ought to be, very satisfactory to the poor or neglected, to be told, that they are placed in that state in order that they may learn to reverence their superiors; especially, when those very superiors frequently owe their elevation to the caprice of fashion, the worldliness of society, or the injustice of political institutions. Nor does this inequality of the social condition seem necessary for the end stated. Suppose that all men stood upon a *perfect level;* there would still be occasion for reverence and pity; for generosity and forbearance; for mutual help and kindness. Besides, it would be but a gross view of society, and a still grosser view of our great and spiritual humanity, to see the virtues of either as chiefly dependant on a mere transient, perishable condition; as if nothing but inferiority could inspire a man with emotions of gratitude and admiration, and nothing but lofty state could fill him with benignity and kindness; as if a rich man were never to be pitied, and a poor man never to be envied; as if all the great and trying experiences, a sensitive and suffering nature, were to be merged in the mere conditions of being well or ill fed.

It may seem quite unnecessary and useless, to advert to reasonings such as I have now noticed. It may be thought enough to say, that the inequalities of the human condition result from the very attributes of human nature. It is true that they do. Yet one may seek, perhaps, if not a final cause, yet the proper use to be made, even of that which belongs to the inevitable constitution of things. And so doing, I should say that inequality of condition is to be regarded as a grand *trial* and *test* of our fidelity to high principle—to the loftiest rectitude. If I stood by one who towered far above me; if he were conspicuous before the world, and the shadow of his greatness flung me into obscurity; if, moreover, we had been companions and competitors, and I had laboured as hard as he, and yet had failed to rise to the same elevation in talent, or in social claims, or if I had risen to it, and yet the world would not see it; if, I say, I stood thus contrasted with another, thus neglected in comparison with him, and then should ask myself, whereto served this difference, I should say—not to work in me necessarily any reverence or gratitude towards my fellow, but to prove and test and work out in me a reverence for the greatness of virtue—to put me upon those deep, unfathomed principles of my nature, that absorb all considerations of self—to fill me with a divine disinterestedness towards another's virtue, with a divine calmness in the consciousness of my own—to raise me above, and carry me beyond, all worldly complainings, to the recognition of the supreme privilege, blessing, happiness of loving the infinite beauty

of truth, the infinite glory of God. It is in this sharp contrast, in this sore conflict, that virtue gains, perhaps, its highest triumph on earth. Nor will it ever, either in this or a future world, escape this trial, this great challenge to the noblest elevation; for *there* it is written, that "one star differeth from another in glory." But there, as the eternal ages roll, as everlasting difference makes everlasting harmony—there will the happy soul be for ever "satisfied with the likeness" of the Divinity—be for ever "filled with all the fulness of God."

I have alluded to certain reasonings with regard to the inequalities of the social condition; but the controversy which the human heart has with this state of things is full practical. How this controversy has been carried on, and how it has failed of true success; how it ought to be carried on, and how it may attain to the most exalted triumph—these are the points which I propose now to consider.

It has been carried on, first, with strife. A man has seen his fellow rising above him; succeeding beyond him in business and the acquisition of property, or gaining the praise of talent, distinguishing himself by professional ability, or literary success; and either way, and, indeed, every way, winning the regard of society; and in fine, taking that place in public estimation, or in social life, which was the object of *his* ambition. Stung with jealousy and envy, he strives to equal or to surpass his prosperous competitor. Day and night he thinks of this: it is the secret, the unacknowledged, perhaps, but powerful impulse, which urges him on to study, to business, to speculation, and to all sorts of plans and schemings, by which he may rise. For this, the ambitious man builds his house; adorns it with costly furniture; clothes his family with splendour; buys horses and carriages; gives rich entertainments; seeks acquaintances that are above him, neglects those that are below him; puts on the best appearances; talks much of his rich or distinguished relations; keeps out of sight things that make against him; is silent about his origin, his lowly, perhaps, but virtuous parentage; lives, a hypocrite; labours, a drudge; wears out his life with toil and anxiety; and all—to rise. Does he succeed? Can he, in fact, succeed in any manner, that ought to satisfy a rational being? I say, no. First, because his course is always agitating, irritating, full of trouble and discomfort; and secondly, because the end of a selfish and worldly ambition, when it is reached, is scarcely more satisfactory than its beginning. Why? Because there are always things beyond it, just as much desired as those which it has already gained. Ask any of the thousands who have succeeded, from among the millions who have sought, and they will tell you, that they are not yet satisfied; that the circle of their ambition is only widened; that the passion for distinction is only stimulated: and as for those few of them who are approaching the goal of supreme power, they need not tell you, for you will see, that they are only straining every nerve harder to the course on which they are running. Can it be wisdom to live in this manner? Can that be wisdom, whose progress is continual vexation, and whose end is inevitable disappointment?

But, in the next place, there is another, a rarer, and, indeed, it is seldom more than an *occasional*, mood of mind, in which the trial of social inequality is met. With this mood, the strife of ambition is over for the time, and it sinks in low murmuring complaint, or wraps itself

in the cheerless garment of misanthropy, or takes refuge behind the hard and hidebound shield of scorn. The man looks out and around upon the splendour of earthly distinctions, and says, "Let it pass; I will not see it; I will not know it. The proud and unjust world—I will not seek its favour, nor love its praise. Sink, thou gorgeous phantom of this world's magnificence, into the depths of eternity!—where thou shalt soon go. Ha! thou art gone! Thou *wert* but a breath, a dream, a cloud-castle; and thou art *gone;* and now I am as wise and good, as if I were rich and great, and as if all the world rang with my name alone. Empty breath of praise! why should I desire ye! Let me alone; leave me to obscurity; leave me to toil—and tears—I can bear them!" But I say to that erring complainer—Is *this*, then, to bear them? Is all this scorn not *caring* for the world? No; the poor man's despite, the neglected man's disdain, the humble man's misanthropy, so far from being lofty wisdom, is not even simple sincerity, nor ordinary good sense. No; it is not *so* that we are to battle with the gauds, and honours, and the pride of this world.

Nor, in the third place, is it any more justly, to do this battle, to fly, as some do, to the heights of a mystic pietism. The one sinks beneath the conflict; the other strives to rise above it; both endeavour to escape from it. I look upon a man whom disappointed ambition, whom earthly mortification and chagrin only, have driven to religion, as upon a coward who has run to a high tower from a post of danger and of duty. True piety is not to lift a man above all comparison with his fellows, but to sustain him *in* that comparison; to enable him, though feeling that he is inferior, yet to be happy; to enable him to say, as John said of Jesus, "he must increase, but I must decrease," and yet to be happy—even as when that noble-minded forerunner said, "the friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly, because of the bridegroom's voice; this my joy, therefore, is fulfilled." It is only a false and erring piety which leads a man to say, "I am one of the elect of God; I am a favourite of Heaven; and I compare not myself with the sons of earth; I am altogether above and beyond all their questions about precedence, and honour, and respectability." He who stands above all other men only in his conventicle or his conference-room, may very well doubt whether his elevation be real, or his religion sound and true. And it is only a false and erring piety, I repeat, which receives earthly discontent and disdain into its bosom, but to lap them in celestial visions, and to buoy them up to dreamy heights of contemplation, above all the rough and staunch conflicts of social life. Many such refuges of modern pietism have there been, answering, in this respect, the same purpose as the monasteries and hermitages of old.

Extremes, indeed, there have always been, one way or the other, to which men have ever been retreating from the close and pressing trials of social ambition. On the one hand, worldliness, wealth, rank, insignia, costumes, have defended them against the searching and honest comparison of themselves with one another. On the other hand, they have escaped into conventual seclusion and wild forest retreats—and farther yet, into spiritual pride, mysticism, asceticism, and every strange vagary of fanciful virtue and imaginary devotion.

This will not do. These artificial defences must be removed; these refuges of lies must be swept away. So are not the trials of society to

be met. No victory is to be gained through such means, but only a kind of safety. No courage is to be nurtured in this way; no fearless truth, no gentle humility, nothing half so beautiful even as the virtue of the old chivalry; but only haughtiness, pride, either worldly or spiritual, a dreamy self-importance, an imbecile reliance on circumstances. The man whom wealth, office, or a title—whom parentage, cast, or a mystic pietism, lifts above the fair comparison of himself with others, is so far safe, indeed; and he may bless his condition, his defences, his armour, if he pleases—may bless the friendly cloud that wraps him from the glittering weapons of his adversary; but he stands not up in the manly, brave, and beautiful conflict of social competition.

For that conflict, I say, may be beautiful. I know that it commonly elicits the worst passions, and unfolds the worst aspects of human nature. That is precisely because it is the severest trial of human nature. But the severest trial is always designed to develop the noblest virtue, and may develop it. The result *need* not be, what it is often seen to be—anger, envy, bitterness—the quarrel of authors, the strifes of rivals, the poor contentions of families, the miserable jealousies and heart-burnings of society. The result may be as beautiful as the trial is severe.

How this effect is to be wrought out, it is now my purpose to show.

You stand then among those who, in common with yourselves, are desirous of the attention, the esteem, the praise of society. You are naturally led to compare your success, in this respect, with theirs. You do not escape this comparison by fleeing to a hermitage, far from the converse of man; you do not escape it by taking refuge behind the escutcheon of rank, the honours of a noble birth; you do not escape it, let us suppose, by mounting up into the heights of a false and mystic devotion; you are a man; you stand among men, and are one of them. Especially, in *this* country, do you thus stand. There are no nurselings of church or state *here;* no baby favourites of society here, to be fondled in the lap of primogeniture; no froward children to be pacified with bright toys, with coronets and titles. The swaddling-clothes of old feudal institutions are here flung aside. You stand among men only as a man, and—be it for good or for evil—altogether as a man. You may be a child of wealth, but the son of the poorest man, from the most barren mountain-side in the country, has a fair chance to outstrip you in the race of honour, and to take a higher place in the world than you; and he probably will do so. But not to insist on this—here you stand, I say, among a thousand competitors; and of almost every man to whom I could speak in society, I might safely say, somebody is above you—somebody has surpassed you—some other, in your own walk. Another preacher has more hearers; another lawyer more clients; another physician more patients; another author more readers; another candidate for the attention of society, educated and trained up with yourself perhaps, has more notice, more invitations, more caressings, from the great world than you have. Now, how is this to be met?

There are three conditions under which this superior success may be gained, to which different considerations are applicable. Let us dwell upon them for a moment.

In the first place, you may say, that it has been unfairly gained; that management and chicanery in a profession, dishonesty in business, or insincerity and sycophancy in society, have carried it over you.

Then, I ask, would you take that success on condition of adopting the same expedients, the same character? Would you exchange your happiness for such happiness? Is such advancement any real success? If you think so, you are not true to yourself. If you cannot stand calmly and see such air-bubbles as quackery, falsehood, and vanity, rising around and above you, you have yet to learn what is the true dignity and self-respect of a man. "But it is rather hard, after all," you may say; and besides, the questions, you may remind me, are not such unmixed questions as I state; your rivals have certain merits; it is by mixing up certain other and lighter things with them, that they rise above you. Then, I say, you must make your election. If you will avail yourself of those other things, you may also have the envied success, such as it is—unsatisfactory while it lasts, and likely enough to be short-lived—but such as it is, you may have it. But if you will not make that compromise, if you will keep your integrity, then be your integrity your reward. It is reward enough. It is, indeed, the true success. I do not deny that it will cost you an effort, a trial. I look upon society as designed, through its very injustice, to put our truth, simplicity, and independence, to severe proof. But let them stand the proof, and they shall come forth as gold purified from the furnace.

But, in the next place, it may be true, that others have surpassed you, by superior industry, by harder study, by greater efforts to accomplish themselves, and to render their manners agreeable to the world around them. Of this case, there is, of course, nothing to be said, but that all complaint on the part of the indolent and negligent is totally unreasonable; and, indeed, is not to be reasoned with, but only to be rebuked.

Without dwelling upon this, therefore, I pass at once to the third, and, to most persons probably, the hardest case of all: the case, I mean, in which the superiority of one to another is the gift of nature, or of circumstances. One inherits wealth; another has beauty; a third is endowed with high intellectual gifts. And from one or another of these causes, or from all of them combined, some are placed above you in the world, and, perhaps, far above you. They are sought, as you are not sought; they are admired and praised, as you are not admired and praised. Attention, adulation, homage, are poured out in lavish abundance at their feet; their names are written in every newspaper, or mentioned in every drawing-room; while you sit in silent places, beneath the shadow of the domestic roof, or by the humble way-side of life; and the great world passes you by, without comment or inquiry. This, I say, is one of the great trials of society; this is, perhaps, the greatest trial in its utmost pressure; and I come now again to the question, how is it to be met?

My answer to this question will relate, first to the distinction itself, and next, to the state of mind with which it is to be regarded.

In the first place, the distinction is far less than it seems; I mean that it is far less to the successful aspirant, than it seems to the observer. Somebody is above *him*, as far as he is above you; and he is, perhaps, as little satisfied with his advancement, as you are with yours. He does not estimate his success as you do; and he is, probably, just as anxious to rise to some higher point, as you are to rise to his point. The same questions, it is likely, the same trials, are passing in his mind

that are passing in yours. Nay, how often is it the case, that the man, upon whose position you are looking with admiration, and almost with envy, whom you dare not approach, by whom you imagine that your attentions would be scorned; how often is he pining, in discontent, in loneliness, and under fancied neglect! The cup of successful ambition, I doubt not, is often drank in solitariness, and is dashed besides with many a bitter ingredient.

But, in the next place, distinction is not only less than it seems, but it is, in another respect, of far less importance than it seems. It is so, I mean, in this respect; that it has no peculiar portion in the *love* of society. Admiration, praise, notice, it may have; but love is not the guerdon of success. That belongs to goodness, and to goodness alone. It is not talent, wealth, or beauty, that wins affection. No; let it not be thought, that God has dealt so unequally with his earthly children as to make the dearest boon of social existence, love, to depend on any factitious or arbitrary distinctions. He has thrown lighter toys among those children, to fall irregularly, and to be gathered unequally, and according to no strict rule of justice—fortunes and honours, stars and coronets, and crowns, has he thus disposed of, to be scrambled for; and often to be crushed and spoiled in the grasp which gains them; but so has he not disposed of the solid and enduring wealth of love. No; not to high birth nor haughty rank; not to beauty, proud of peerless charms; not to genius, that stands aloft in misanthropic scorn: to none of these is love given. It is dispensed on a more rigorous condition. It is no chance prize, no "accident of an accident." It is taken *out* of the blind lottery of life. To goodness, and to goodness only, is true love given. And well, full well, is that boon earned, and dearly, most dearly is it cherished, in ten thousand thousand dwellings, unadorned by wealth, unknown to fame, unvisited by the flaunting robes of worldly fashion. By those still waters of deep, pure love, let the multitudes of men sit down; of those silent fountains let them drink deep, and not disturb them, nor turn them into bitterness, by eager and angry struggles for the lighter gifts of worldly distinction.

But I have admitted that these gifts have their value; and conceding this to them, I am to consider, in the second place, and finally, with what state of mind they are to be regarded.

And the first feeling which is called for in the circumstances, is one of profound submission to the will of God. Your neighbour holds a position above you, I have supposed, not merely by the aid of arts which you cannot practise, and do not envy; not alone by means of superior industry or study, to which you are bound in justice to give place; but by the force of talents or other recommendations, which he owes to the sovereign Dispenser of every blessing. It is God, therefore, who has made you to differ. Was it for you to demand of the great Creator what measure of abilities, what charms of person, what endowments of fortune, or what honours of parentage, he should bestow upon you? Even if you could perceive no good reasons in the general economy of things, why one human being should differ from another; even if you thought it ever so desirable that all men, in natural advantages, should stand on a perfect level, it is enough for you to know, that disparity is the sovereign ordination of the infinite will. Thy neighbour's greatness, be it derived from original talent, from beauty, or high parentage,

is the shrine of the Almighty Sovereignty. Before it, thou shouldst stand in awe; in awe, I say, not of thy neighbour, but in awe of God. And the voice which comes to that shrine, to thy murmuring thought is, "Be still, and know that I am God!" Dost thou complain of this? As well mightst thou demand, that some higher world had been assigned thee for thy sphere! As well mightst thou demand, that thou hadst been made one of a loftier order of creatures—angel or archangel.

Here I might pause. But I would not leave the subject without pointing out some other states of mind, with which the trial, whether of real or supposed inferiority, is to be met. With this purpose in view, let us look at our own nature, and let us look around us upon our fellow-men. To gain the end in view, it is needful to look upon our fellow-men with love and confidence—upon our own nature, with devout gratitude and veneration.

Upon our fellow-men, I say, let us look with love, with confidence. To our peace of mind, this is essential. A man may think lightly of this advice; he may disdain to submit the high controversy with his rivals to a moral force; he may smile in derision, when we put forward the dictates of a gentle and loving spirit, to wrestle with the strong and stormy passions of human life; he may say, that it is as if we sent a child into the battle of armed men; yet let me tell that man, that this is the only thing—this child in the man's heart—this child-like love, this child-like confidence—is the only thing that can bring the poor and miserable strifes and envyings of the world to an end. Let him call it what he will—weak, poor-spirited, mean—it is the only thing that can help him. That emblem-child which our Saviour once set in the midst of his ambitious disciples, is here the only powerful teacher. Refuse that teaching, pursue the worldly course—refuse, in short, to stand in any relation to your fellow-beings, but that of strife for the precedence, and there is no help for you. It is not in heaven nor earth to help you. It is thus, that the disinterested love of our kind is made a necessity; not to be dispensed with, but upon condition of giving up all true peace of mind. Thus stern and uncompromising is the language of Providence. If you had been called upon only to love and admire beings far above you, in some loftier sphere of existence, it had been easy. So had you been little tried. But you are placed side by side, with beings who, some of them, tower above you; you are placed in this close pressure of social competition—and why? It is, I say, that every particle of mean selfishness, and base envy, may be expelled from your bosom. Love, then—pure, confiding, generous, disinterested love—has become to you a necessity; you cannot do without it. You might have stood without it on some solitary and barren point, alone in the creation; but, in the world, you cannot live and be happy without it.

And how often have I seen, and surely was struck with observing it, that simple love, simple confidence, simple self-forgetfulness, makes its way in the world, makes its way to the heart, penetrates through all barriers—finding everywhere an open door, and good welcome and acceptance! I will not say that it was plain in person, poor in estate, or humble in condition; it might be so, or it might not; but this I mean to say, that in every sphere, disinterested goodness is the pre-eminent quality; happy in itself, and most likely, other things being equal, to be happy in the love of others. Yes, amidst all the selfishness and in-

justice of the world, this is true. And, therefore, would I send every complainer, every murmurer, every jealous, or anxious, or desponding person, that is ever thinking of himself—I would send him to the school of love—to the school of Christ. Thou mayest seek, restless, discontented one! many resources, many reliefs; but thou must come to Christ, if ever thou wouldst find rest to thy soul. This is no cant-language, no language of the pulpit merely; it is the language of simple truth; the only language that applies to the simple, actual relations of being to being. Had there been *no* Bible, had there been *no* religion, it were true. Never canst thou look rightly upon thy neighbour, upon thy companion, soaring above thee, unless thou lookest upon him in a kindly and loving spirit. This only can compose the miserable strifes of society. Come down, celestial goodness!—as an angel, come down; and unseal the fountains of healing, and spread new life and beauty over the barrenness of an unkindly, envious, and unhappy world!

One further consideration I have mentioned, and to that I would invite your attention for a moment in close. It is the consideration of our nature.

Your neighbour is above you in the world's esteem, perhaps—above you, it may be, in fact; but what are *you?* You are a man; you are a rational and religious being; you are an immortal creature. Yes, a glad and glorious existence is yours; your eye is open to the lovely and majestic vision of nature; the paths of knowledge are around you, and they stretch onward to eternity; and, most of all, the glory of the infinite God, the all-perfect, all-wise, and all-beautiful, is unfolded to you. What now, compared with this, is a little worldly eclat? The treasures of infinity and of eternity are heaped upon thy labouring thought; can that thought be deeply occupied with questions for mortal prudence? It is as if a man were enriched by some generous benefactor, almost beyond measure, and should find nothing else to do, but to vex himself and complain, because another man was made a few thousands richer.

Where, unreasonable complainer! dost thou stand, and what is around thee? The world spreads before thee its sublime mysteries, where the thoughts of sages lose themselves in wonder; the ocean lifts up its eternal anthems to thine ear; the golden sun lights thy path; the wide heavens stretch themselves above thee, and worlds rise upon worlds, and systems beyond systems, to infinity: and dost thou stand in the centre of all this, to complain of thy lot and place! Pupil of that infinite teaching! minister at Nature's great altar! child of heaven's favour! ennobled being! redeemed creature! must thou pine in sullen and envious melancholy amidst the plenitude of the whole creation?

But thy neighbour is above thee, thou sayest. What then? What is that to thee? What, though the shout of millions rose around him? What is that, to the million-voiced nature that God has given *thee?* That shout dies away into the vacant air; it is not his; but thy *nature*—thy favoured, sacred, and glorious nature—is thine. It is the reality—to which praise is but a fleeting breath. Thou canst meditate the things which applause but celebrates. In that thou art a man, thou art infinitely exalted above what any man can be in that he is praised. I had rather *be* the humblest man in the world, than barely *be thought*

greater than the greatest. The beggar is greater as a man, than is the man merely as a king. Not one of the crowds that listened to the eloquence of Demosthenes and Cicero—not one who has bent with admiration over the pages of Homer or Shakspeare—not one who followed in the train of Cæsar or of Napoleon, would part with the humblest power of thought, for all the fame that is echoing over the world, and through the ages.

Upon those mighty resources, then, upon those infinite benefactions of thy being, cast thyself, and be satisfied. Thou canst read; thou canst think; thou canst feel; thou canst love—and be loved; thou canst love the infinitely lovely:—say, then, that it is enough! In that ocean of good, let poor and pitiful pride and ambition be swallowed up. Amidst an infinitude of blessings, let humble gratitude and boundless reverence be the permanent forms and characters of thy being.

ON THE PLACE WHICH EDUCATION AND RELIGION MUST HAVE IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF SOCIETY.

2 Peter i. 5—7: "Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity."

I have thus far, in this series of discourses on society, been occupied chiefly with the consideration of evils and dangers. I shall in this discourse, invite your attention to remedial and conservative principles. It is not my intention, however, to apply them to the evils already stated, since it was natural to connect, with the notice of them, some consideration of the proper remedies; and since there are other evils no less obvious and urgent. I may add here, that I aim at no completeness in this series of discourses; my plan is to notice only such topics, however isolated and disconnected, as justly press themselves upon our attention, in the moral views which we are taking of modern society.

The principles of improvement and safety which I propose now to examine, are education and religion. The space which I shall be able to give to these subjects, in a single discourse, must be, compared with their importance, very small; and, indeed, instead of attempting fully to discuss their social bearings, my purpose rather is, in accordance with the hint of my text, to suggest some things which need to be *added* to the popular views of them.

But let us consider, for a moment, the state of things on which these suggestions are to bear.

It is, doubtless, a very extraordinary state of things. Its distinctive feature is a grand popular movement, slowly propagating itself through all civilized nations—a revolution of ideas, which is elevating the mass of mankind to importance and power; and, in fact, to the eventual government of the world. It is a revolution which goes alike beyond all former examples in history, and principles in philosophy. The *education* of this age—that mass of sentiment and maxims which it has received from former ages—does not prepare it to understand itself. Though the noblest genius and philosophy of former times have been distinguished by their generous recognition of the claims of humanity; yet they have seldom descended to work out the great problem of human rights. They have shown more admiration for human nature, than confidence in it. Their speculations, indeed, have proceeded upon

grounds widely different from the present state of facts. When Aristotle discoursed in such discouraging terms on the popular tendencies, he discoursed concerning a people that could not read; that had no newspapers; that were ignorant and brutal, compared with our educated and Christian communities. When Plato reasoned of his ideal republic, his ground was pure hypothesis; his work pure fiction. The philosophy of modern politics has not been written in past times; it cannot be written now; that work, I believe, in its full perfection must be left to a future age. I do not pretend to say what it will be; the principle of intelligent Christian freedom, may develope results that are out of the range of our present contemplation. But this, I think, is evident, that when the future philosopher and historiographer rises, that shall analyze and portray the stupendous revolution that is now passing in the civilized world, he will speak of a revolution having no precedent in history. None was ever so universal, so profound, or so fearful: all former revolutions have been local, occasional, and sanguinary. In former days, when power has been wrested from its despotic possessor, it has been done only by a violent and bloody hand. But now, an influence, silent and irresistible, is rising up from the mass of the people, and is stealing from thrones, and princedoms, and hierarchies, their unjust prerogatives; and, at the same time, as if by some wonder-working magic, is making their incumbents helpless to resist, and even willing to obey. Potentates are learning a new lesson, and so are the people too. Before, revolutions have been violent and bloody, from the very weakness of those who have carried them on, from the very uncertainty whether they should succeed. Now, the people are reposing in calm security upon their undoubted strength. Assurance has made them moderate. Let no one mistake their moderation for apathy, or their quietness for defeat; for they are calm only in proportion as they are determined and sure.*

Such is, undoubtedly, the character of the present era, however we may regard the good or the evil involved in it. To me, I confess, it is far the most momentous and sublime era in the history of the world. The introduction of Christianity, and the discovery of printing—the two greatest events on record—are, in fact, now producing, for the first time, on the broad theatre of national fortunes, the very results which we are witnessing. They have given birth, if not to the free principles of modern times, at least to their free action. Like the sun and the moon in heaven, they have penetrated by their influence the great deep of society. The effect produced, may well awaken that solemn and even religious emotion in the mind, of which a late distinguished writer has spoken. What is now presented to the attention of the world, is not, as formerly, kingdoms convulsed, or navies wrecked upon the shore, but that "tide in the affairs of men," that slow rising, and gradual swelling, of the whole ocean of society, which is to bear everything upon its bosom.

It is scarcely possible to speak of this great movement of modern

* Nothing surprised me more, four years ago in England, than what appeared, at first sight, this apathy; this moderated tone of the most radical reformers: but how much more was I struck, to find, on closer observation, this deeper determination, this repose of conscious strength; the purpose to succeed not weakened, but only stronger in its calmness!

society, without something like anxiety and apprehension. The very terms, in which our conceptions of it naturally clothe themselves, bear an aspect as of something portentous and fearful. And that there is actual danger in this revolution of opinions, I am so far from denying, that it is the very purpose of this discourse to discuss the only principles of safety.

But, at the same time, I cannot take my place among the alarmists. I cannot believe that the feeling of apprehension, which is springing up all over the civilized world, is justified in its full extent. There are dangers, doubtless: what season of probation for high ends ever failed to be a season of peril? To warn one another of that peril; to summon brave, honest, and true hearts, to meet it; to stand amidst the people as one of their brethren, and to lift up the voice of friendly admonition, is well. How well it is to stand aloof from them, and to fling down discouragement and scorn upon the popular cause, I must leave others to determine. But this I must say, that if indeed that cause shall fail, if the future historian of this momentous period must write its story in tears and blood, I shall ever believe it will be, in part, because the proper intellectual guides of the world were not true to the solemn trust reposed in them. It is, indeed, an extraordinary fact—a fact reversing, in a striking manner, the usual course of things—that while opinion ordinarily propagates itself from the more educated to the more ignorant classes, the popular cause is now rising and swelling against the loudest remonstrances of so many superior minds, as if it were, indeed, an ocean-tide, against which nothing is destined to prevail.

This remonstrance, this alarm, seems to me, I have ventured to say, to be carried to an unwarrantable extent. Alarm, indeed, appears to be one of the epidemic diseases of the age. Every religious association, every little spiritual coterie, every school of sect, speculation, and philanthropy, is trembling for the fate of the world. *Now*, the philosophy of the world is going to ruin it; *then*, its extravagance, intemperance, licentiousness, is to do the work; then popery, heresy, infidelity, is elevated to this bad eminence in mischief. The danger from some of these quarters I freely admit; but, it is really worth while to observe, through how many prophecies of ruin, through how many critical and doomed periods, the world has lived. Truly, one is sometimes tempted to say to these alarmists, "Good sirs, have a little patience; the world is likely to last our time; the purposes of Providence will stand, though you be disappointed in some of your favourite theories or projects."

It is one effect of this alarm, to turn the public attention too much to immediate and palpable resorts for safety, to the readiest instruments that come to hand, rather than to those deep and broad foundations which must be laid in the moral education, the cultivated and spiritualized mind, of the community. Thus, if some Constitution can be preserved, if some House of Lords can be hedged about with impregnable defences, it seems to be thought that the world will be saved. Thus almost all the reforms of the day are turning upon some palpable evil; as intemperance, licentiousness, pauperism. But important, or otherwise, as any of these efforts may be, there is a work of redemption that must go deeper, must go down into the heart of the world, or it will *not* be saved, in the great crisis that is approaching. How easy

were it to show, that there are evils lying beneath, all palpable evils, and which, if the same universal attention were fixed upon them, would appear far greater. Intemperance, licentiousness, pauperism, and with these, popular violence, mobs, and tumults, are all but indexes of deeper evils, symptoms of deeper maladies, that are seated in the very heart of society. Alas! the world is not well, is not happy in itself—the infinite wants of humanity are not provided for—else, would not the world break out, on every hand, for relief from those necessities and pains that are preying upon its inmost bosom.

I must add, that even where the real conservative principles, education and religion, are resorted to, they are too often, I fear, but superficially regarded; and are, as they are used, but ready instruments, instead of being considered as deep principles and thorough remedies. If education with us is a mere technical system, a mere teaching of the arts and sciences commonly learned in schools; if religion is a mere state-engine, or only a form or creed, or barely a charity to the poor and vicious, neither will exert the needed influence. It is striking to observe, that the whole strength of the Tory party in England, all its will, wish, and thought about religion, seems to be occupied with the preservation of a visible Establishment. I may do injustice to this aim, but it seems to me that it is, in the hands of many of its most earnest supporters, the mere worldly scheme of worldly men; and certain I am, that no such scheme will answer now. I maintain, on the contrary, that deeper views of education and religion must be added to those which now prevail; that to education must be added a moral influence, and to religion a deeper philosophy and a more thoroughly practical character, in order to make them the guardian powers that the present age requires. And these are the positions of which it is now my further purpose to attempt some illustration.

The first subject to be considered is education. From the earliest settlement of the country, this has engaged the earnest attention of our communities. We have set the first example in the world, of the instruction of the whole mass of the people. Education has ever been our watch-word, and our boast. No celebration of any public festival, no grave dissertation of the closet upon our institutions, ever omits the recognition of its importance. On every side, it is constantly represented as the sheet-anchor of our liberty.

Well is it that we pay this homage to education; but have we sufficiently considered what it must be, to answer the end proposed? Have we not made it a mere watchword? Have we not regarded it as a mere talisman, and expected some magical effects from it, rather than entered into a deep consideration of its nature; of the qualities which adapt it in the preservation of the national order and security?

I beg attention to this inquiry. And for the purpose of awakening that attention, I wish to present to you one or two extraordinary facts bearing on this point, from the history of education in Europe. In Prussia, where, so far as mechanism is concerned, the most perfect system of public instruction ever known has recently been adopted—in that kingdom, I say, education is considered as nothing without religion. "The first vocation of every school," says one of its ordinances, "is to train up the young in such a manner as to implant in their minds a knowledge of the relation of man to God, and, at the same

time to excite both the will and the strength to govern their lives after the spirit and precepts of Christianity. Schools must early train children to piety, and, therefore, must strive to second and complete the early instructions of parents." Again, in France, which some while since sent one of her most distinguished philosophers * to inquire into the Prussian system of education, and where that system, but without its religious influence, has been partially adopted, we are presented with this extraordinary and astounding statement,—viz. *that in the best educated departments, the greatest amount of crime has been found to exist.* This is not an observation made at hazard; it is absolutely a matter of *statistics.* Nakedly stated, the fact is this; *that education in France has produced crime.* This, at least, is what is admitted by the friends of education in France, and insisted upon by its enemies in England;† and with my views of the subject, I have no difficulty in admitting that it is true.

For this is the view which I take: that education, considered simply as instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, &c.; education, separate from any moral influence, does not necessarily tend to make any people better, and may be easily perverted, so as to make them worse. "Knowledge," it is often said, "is power;" but it is power as capable of bad as of good uses. Thus, the knowledge of reading and writing communicated to a people, may only increase the number of forgers and counterfeiters: the knowledge of arithmetic may only multiply the chances of knavery in accounts. Thus, also, an acquaintance through newspapers with the conduct of government, or of obnoxious individuals, may urge a simple people to disaffection and treason, or hurry a quiet people into mobs and tumults. And, in the same way, *general* knowledge, into which no moral principles are infused, may lead men to ambition, discontent, envy, and unhappiness, and by these means, to excess, extravagance, and vice. But I am speaking mainly of that particular knowledge which is commonly gained in schools. There is, indeed, a higher intelligence which is favourable to virtue, inasmuch as it sees all else but virtue to be utter folly and mistake: but of knowledge considered as a mere technical acquisition, I say, that it is a mere instrument, whose use and utility will depend on its moral direction.

It is upon these clear and indisputable grounds, that I maintain the necessity of adding to our knowledge, virtue: to our system of education, a moral and spiritual influence. Other things must be taught in our schools, besides the elements usually considered as belonging to them. Good morals and pious sentiments should be as anxiously and earnestly taught, as reading and writing.

But I must not be content on this vital point with a general statement. Education, in the largest sense, is the preparation of the mind for the scene in which it is to act. What, then, should be the education of a free people; and, indeed, of human beings as such? I answer: that our youth should be taught, at some period before they leave the common schools, that they are to be electors, jurors, magistrates, and, perhaps, legislators; and thus, virtually, rulers of the country. They should be made to feel something of the weighty charge that is

* Cousin. See his Report on the Prussian System.

† See an article on Democracy, in Blackwood's Magazine, No. 225.

about to be devolved upon them. They should be made to understand the duties to their country and to their God, which are implied in the trust they are about to assume. Were this faithfully taught in all our schools, we might hope, ere long, to see a time when the whole political action of the country should not run to passion, and caprice, and prejudice, and a mere contest for the mastery. Were this done, we might hope to see, ere long, an end of that pernicious distinction which is now made between individual and party morality, between personal and official conscience; and political confidence and public honour would no longer be heaped upon men whose lives are stained with private vices. Again, an education of youth for the part they have to act in our communities, should enter deeply into their social relations; should imbue their minds with independence, magnanimity, candour, and courtesy; should put them on their guard against ambitious aspirings and preying discontents; should moderate the strife for social precedence; should teach respect for the laws; should clothe the constitution of the country with an inviolable panoply; should arm the majesty of legal justice with the authority of conscience. In fine, an education for life essentially involves the deepest principles of religion; and though the family is the great school for this kind of education, yet no school should fail of recognising it as a part of the nurture and discipline of youth. The weariness and *ennui* that are commonly witnessed in our schools, the indocility and insubordination of which there is so much complaint, arise, in a considerable measure, from the want of any perceived connexion between them and the practical objects of life. The child does not well understand what all this study is for. Place, then, before him the scene of life, make it a part of the regular business of instruction to speak to him of the situations in which he will be placed, and of what will be a just and noble conduct in them; and then, as surely as human nature has any principles to be relied on, their attention and interest will be aroused. The ends of life, the principles of happiness, the art of living—physically, mentally, and morally considered—the morals of business and pleasure, the occupations and callings of men, carried into detail—what they are, what are the instruments they work with, what is their utility, what are their duties—all these subjects, not in dry and abstract terms, such as I now use, but with vivid, and almost dramatic representation, might be presented to our youth, and contribute to that intelligence and virtue, which are the basis of our national well-being and safety.

Education must rise among us, or the nation must sink. That it *will* advance, I cannot doubt, when I see the spirit that is manifested in various parts of the country. But there is one alarming fact, that ought to fix the attention of the country till it is aroused to greater exertions than it has yet put forth. The progress of population, in some of the States, is, at this moment, outstripping the progress of education. There was a time, when scarcely a youth could be found in the whole nation, who was not taught the elements of learning. The number of the uninstructed is now some hundreds of thousands, if it must not, indeed, be stated to be more than a million! I know not in what terms to dwell upon this fact, that shall present its full claims upon the public attention. If nations, as such, have ever any vocation, ours is to educate the people. If Providence ever laid a weight of obligation, like

the weight of destiny, upon any people, it has laid that obligation upon us. If it ever spread before the eyes of any people the yawning gulf of destruction, and distinctly warned them to beware of it, it has spread before us, in that character, the dark gulf of popular ignorance. Into it the nation will inevitably descend, unless it is closed up. No single sacrifice, like the fabled sacrifice of the Roman Curtius, can avert the danger. The fearful chasm in our popular education can be closed only by the united efforts of the whole people. A representative government represents the character of the people: and that government which represents prevailing ignorance, degradation, brutality, and passion, has its fate as certainly sealed, as if, from the cloud that envelopes the future, a hand came forth and wrote upon your mountain walls, the doom of utter perdition!

To avert such a doom, the next great power to which we appeal, is religion. Intelligence and religion are the two grand conservative principles of all society; and neither of them can be relied on, to the exclusion of the other. Religion is wanted to give to intelligence a right direction; and intelligence is equally wanted to make religion rational, sober, and wise; to preserve it from superstition and fanaticism; from that fatal substitution, so common, of forms, and fancies, and articles of faith, for practical virtue. I say, that neither of these great conservative principles can be dispensed with. Many political economists have insisted on the necessity of education, without seeming to be sensible of the necessity of religion: but I cannot understand upon what ground a man can believe in one, without believing in the other. Nay, if I *believed* in neither, if I looked upon the frame of society only with the eye of an artist, if I cared not what became of human governments, or the human character, or anything else human, I should still be compelled to see and admit, that there is no basis for human welfare, individual, social, or national, none conceivable or possible, none provided by the great framer of the world, but intelligence and virtue.

But it is not my purpose, in this discourse, to defend so large, and, I hope, so evident a proposition. It is my design rather, as I have stated it, to point out an extension of the great conservative principles, which, I apprehend, is not equally admitted, or, at least, not equally considered. This design, so far as it relates to religion, contemplates that subject in two relations to the general welfare; first to the poor and distressed classes of society, and secondly, to the whole body.

With regard to pauperism, and its consequent miseries and vices, the religious action of society has hitherto mostly contented itself with charities; with means and efforts directed to the relief of its palpable evils. I trust the time has now arrived, when a new principle is to be adopted. This principle is, to do the least possible for the body, and the utmost possible for the mind; to apply ourselves directly to the root of all evil, the soul's ignorance and debasement; to elevate the physical condition, through the improvement of the moral condition.

It has at length been found out, that general and indiscriminate charities only multiply the evils which they propose to relieve; that pauperism grows by what it thus feeds on. The history of English charities has shown this on a large scale, and our own experience, so far as we have followed that example, has brought out the same result. This treatment of pauperism constantly produces a twofold effect: physical

necessity and mental imbecility together, grow and thrive upon it. So certain is this, that beggary has become, to every reflecting man who has looked into the subject, the index to the saddest combination of physical and moral evils. In Europe there is more apology for it. But I confess that in *our* country, in *our* streets, it affects me to see a man or a woman stretch out the hand for alms; for I know that, in almost all cases, it is an indication just as clear as if a placard were presented by that hand, setting forth a story of indolence, improvidence, vice, and degradation. And just as plainly would a true hand-writing show, that to give to such applicants is, in almost every instance, only to increase all that debasement and misery. Nay, and I am inclined to think, there is more suffering that is buried in silence, ay, and clothed in the decent garb of respectable poverty, than is indicated by the brazen beggary of the streets. Still I admit that such cases are to be attended to; but I maintain, that the only right attention is that which follows them to their homes. When it finds there sickness, or helpless age, or urgent distress, which for the moment nothing else can meet, it is to give relief. But the grand principle of all wise charity is, that he who would benefit a poor family, must visit it, must make himself acquainted with its condition and character, and must apply himself to the removal of those mental and moral evils which lie at the foundation of all its wants and miseries.*

In fine, religion, when it addresses itself to the relief of indigence, must learn to respect the poor, and to feel for them. "To goodness we must add brotherly kindness." I fear we little know what a deep and almost terrific sentiment of hatred, is often engendered in the breasts of the poor by the ordinary administration of charities. They feel themselves degraded, rather than obliged, by this manner of giving; they become, in fact, enemies of their benefactors. They have their part to play as well as the philanthropists; they consider it a sort of contest between them; and *their* business is to get all they can, to deceive as much as possible, and to remunerate themselves, to the utmost, for the unhappy and degrading relation which they sustain to their superiors. This is human nature: and it is only by forgetting what human nature is, that we have been able to overlook this inevitable result. A *man* is not to be relieved as your horse or your dog may be; it must be done with a sentiment of respect. I would that a new mode of giving were introduced, more accordant with the humanity and gentleness of the Gospel. I would that a man should be pained by having a fellow-being approach him in the humble attitude of a beggar. I would that a flush of ingenuous and sympathizing shame should overspread the brow of the giver. Alms are not to be a matter of business; and yet let it be considered whether all public and indiscriminate charities will not, without the greatest care, inevitably be of this character. They must not be conferred upon the poor with indifference, or flung to them with contempt.

Would you do good then to your poor brethren of the human family —respect them, love them, feel for them. Go forth, and commune

* On this head, I cannot do anything so well, as to refer the reader to Mr. Arnold's last admirable Report. It is Mr. A.'s "Seventh Semi-annual Report of his service as Minister at large in New York."

with them. Lay aside your robes of pride; they will but entangle you. Go freely forth, and as you have opportunity, mingle with them; commune with them frankly; help them; comfort them; make them respect themselves; make them virtuous; make them happy. How can you hope to do the good you ought to do, to your poor brethren, till in deep sympathy you feel and act as one among them, and of them? They are not out of the pale of humanity; they *are* your brethren. You *are* of them. Before the great Giver, you are *all* poor. Where is the proud, strong, rich man, that stands aloof from his fellow-man, as if he were one of another species? To-morrow, perhaps, thou shalt lie down upon thy bed, to die—poor as the poorest—about to be stripped of everything. *To-day*, thou oughtest to kneel down before thy God, and to say, "Give me, O thou Supreme and ever Gracious One—not gold and silver—but that which is infinitely dearer, that which I infinitely more need than ever houseless outcast needed my alms—give me thy pardon, thy mercy, thine everlasting favour!"

Such, my friends, is the application of religion to the single relation in society of the rich to the poor; let us now consider it in its bearing on the welfare of the whole social body.

The simple and single question is, what kind of religion is adapted to the ends of our particular government and our peculiar social economy? If religion were to answer the purposes of a despotic government, it might be a mere political engine, a creature of the state. Such were most of the religions of antiquity. If it were to be the mere tool of a priesthood, or of an ecclesiastical state, it might be, to answer that purpose, a superstition and a bondage. Believing, acquiescing, submitting, might then be everything, and practice, little or nothing. But if religion is to be the friend, the improver and guardian of a whole people, what must it then be?

I might answer in the very words of Scripture, and say, that it must be a religion, "first pure; then, peaceable; full of good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy;" or in the words of my text, and say, "Add to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity."

But let us enter into some detail; and, looking beyond the narrow bounds of sectarian preference, let us consider, upon broad and rational grounds, what the religion of a free people must be.

Surely, it must first of all be pure. It must lay the axe at the root of everything wrong in society. It must hold no compromise with the vices either of the rich or of the poor, of the high or of the low; of politicians or private men, of statesmen or citizens. All are to come under one grand law, and to be amenable to one rule. There is to be no saving clause for people of condition, for the great or rich, for prince or monarch. None are to be considered as above the restraints of religion, and none beneath its mercies.

But the main consideration on which I intend to insist is, that our religion must be practical. Solemn forms, and dark scholastic dogmas, might answer the purpose of producing an outward decency and an implicit acquiescence, but they will not be living powers, acting on the vital interests of society. Doctrines, that have been written in books, must be written in the heart. Creeds must not take the place of virtues, nor professions of principles. All substitutions that prevent reli-

gion from bearing directly upon the heart and the daily life, must be done away. Nor is the work to be done in this respect, a slight one. How much religion *is* kept from the hearts of the people by the common forms of its administration, is a serious question. In this view, I look with more than doubt upon the peculiar constitution of the church in this country. We have not an establishment, and we bless ourselves in our exemption from it. But we have, what I fear is worse in its effect upon the popular mind, an ecclesiastical oligarchy. In most other Christian countries, the people are regarded as the children of the church, and are freely invited to participate in its ordinances. Two or three sects among ourselves, the Catholics, the Episcopalians, and the Unitarians in some of their churches, follow the same rule. But with these exceptions, the churches of this country hold the grand characteristic ordinances of Christianity in the power of their vote. And, if religion, in its only embodied form, thus stands aloof from the people, if it surrounds itself with a barrier of exclusion, does it not so far cut itself off from free access to individual minds and hearts? In such a country as this, above all others, religion should be the liberal, generous, and gracious protector and friend of the people. No otherwise can it be efficient and practical.

But there are other defects in its administration. If religion clothes itself with the cumbrous armour of the Middle Ages, with scholastic dogmas and disquisitions, it cannot worthily and manfully fight the battle for freedom. The great foes of our liberty, sin, vice, avarice, sensuality, luxury, and social ambition, are not so to be vanquished. What care *they* for decrees, and substitutions, and imputations of righteousness, and the subtilties of creeds—paper shields, and helmets of parchment, and solemn priestly robes—what, I repeat, do the rooting herds of worldliness and voluptuousness, care for them? Religion must come to a closer contest with human wickedness, if it would ever gain the mastery. The pulpit must be unchained: the preacher must be free. No fastidious solemnity, no artificial sanctity, no superstitious dogmas of prevailing opinion about what is peculiarly spiritual or religious, must restrain him. He must go down freely into the midst of life, and nothing must escape him that seriously affects the virtue of society. The power which the preacher might exert on the public welfare, is as yet but little known. One day in seven given up to him; ten thousand pulpits in this land opened to him; so many posts in a country to hold it against its moral enemies—such an array of force, were it wisely exerted, might stand against all dangers, and ensure the national intelligence, virtue, and piety.

But there is still another and more subtle foe to the practical efficiency of our religion; and that is found in the prevailing idea of its nature. The constitution of the church, the character of the pulpit, have their influence, and it is great. But there is, more deeply embedded in the very heart of society, the conception that religion does not consist in the practical, every day virtues—justice, honesty, brotherly kindness, gentleness, candour, and truth—but that it consists essentially in a certain peculiar state of the affections, an acquiescence of the heart in a particular plan of salvation, the consummation of a special process of experience, the result, in short, of a miraculous conversion. Other things, indeed, follow from religion; but this is religion itself. I have

weighed every word I have now uttered, with unfeigned anxiety to do no injustice to the popular sentiment. And I do not object, let it be observed, that this process and these peculiarities should be considered as occasional appendages of real piety and goodness, but only that they should be regarded as its essence. And that they are so regarded, the answer of three persons out of every four you meet will show you. If you question them as to their religious character, you will find that it is made by them to depend on these points. The question with them will be about a time and a process, a despair and a hope, a conviction and a conversion. The main stress of their anxieties will rest upon these points. They will not ask themselves, whether they are now honest and upright, temperate and forbearing, kind hearted and true; but whether at a particular time they have had a particular experience, and whether they have kept up the feeling of that experience all along till now.

I have entered farther than I intended into this distinction, but it is, indeed, most vital to the bearings of religion on society. For is it not perfectly evident, that, in proportion as too much stress is laid upon the points just noticed, too little will be laid upon the virtues of social and private life? This, I apprehend, is the grand defect of the religion of our country. There is much religion among us, and I believe that it is increasing. So far all is well, is cheering. Would that it were all sound, rational, and true!

It is possible, in our religion, to give an undue prominence even to the purest spirituality and piety; and thus to give too little space to the social virtues. There is one piece of sacred history that most emphatically teaches us on this point. David was a most devout man; his writings show it; and this, I suppose, is what is meant by his being called "a man after God's own heart." And yet he was guilty of some of the most heinous social offences on record. And this is not a solitary instance. Your own observation, perhaps, might furnish some sad examples of this tremendous error. Some of the most devout men that ever I have known—I say not that they were hypocrites—men, as I believe, of sincere though erring piety and prayer, were, in their social relations, some of the worst men that I ever knew. What does the whole history of religion, Pagan, Popish, and Protestant, more clearly show, than this exposure? Men have worshipped God, and, at the same time, hated, persecuted, cast out, crushed, and destroyed their fellow-men. It was against this error that an apostle set himself, when he said, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how doth he love God whom he hath not seen!"

For the improvement of society, then, we want a religion of society. We want a religion that comes home to the heart in all its affections; that touches all the relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, friends and associates. We want a religion for business and for amusement, for public office and private duty, for every social act that a man can perform—whether he gives his suffrage, or decides questions in a court of justice, or dispenses wealth in hospitality, or sits at the frugal board of humble poverty. We want a religion of kindness, and gentleness, and generosity, and candour, and modesty, and forbearance, and integrity, and self-respect, and mutual respect.

And let me add for my own defence, that we want a religion that will speak of all these things. I know very well, that some of the topics which I am discussing in this series of discourses, have fallen upon ears quite unaccustomed to hear such things from the pulpit. I know that some persons will consider many of these matters as having nothing to do with religion, and quite out of place in the pulpit. Most earnestly do I protest against this conclusion. What was the example of the great Master? Did he show any of this modern fastidiousness about preaching? How free, and natural, and various, was his manner! how unrestrained his discourse! Though delivering words of inspiration, which were to be recorded for the instruction of all ages; though constantly engaged in the highest mission ever fulfilled on earth; though surrounded by the watchful eyes of jealous and formal Pharisees, yet there was no staid or affected solemnity in his discourse: he addressed himself to every case, availed himself of every incident around him; the homes of Judea rise before us as we read him; her rulers, her judges, her political condition, her social state, all have a place in his teachings and warnings; there was not a topic within the range of moral influence to which he did not freely apply himself. Upon the authority of that great example, I claim a right here, in the church of Christ, to speak of everything that affects the moral, the vital welfare of the people. I have a contest here—with error, with sin and misery. I do not want any technical system of theology to tell me what they are: I know what they are. If I had never heard of any creed or system, I should just as well know what sin and misery are. I know what they are, and where they are. I see them, I feel them, all around me. And, so seeing and feeling, I must have liberty to speak to them—to go where they are—to go wherever a free discourse upon them will carry me, without stopping to inquire whether it is beyond the artificial pale of what is called a sermon. You may call the communication by whatsoever name it pleases you to characterize it. Say, if you choose, that it is *not* a sermon; call it an oration, a speech, an address; but if it answers its purpose, if it opens to you a wider range of duties, if it spreads the feeling of conscience over a larger field of life, I shall be satisfied. That heavy and dull word, *sermon*—with a thousand formal and lifeless pictures of association stamped upon it—is, I fear, a shackle to many preachers, and a stone of stumbling to many hearers—and such an one as prevents many from hearing at all. Let it be a free, natural, manly address to the people, on their most vital interests, and it would be a different thing—different to many hearers, and very different with many preachers.

And such *is* the proper office of preaching. It *is* a simple address to the people, and upon their most vital interests. And in saying this, in defending the position which I now take, I am not wandering at all from the leading subject on which I am engaged — the influence of religion upon our social and national welfare. This is precisely what we want—that the preacher should come out from his set forms, his technical themes, and monotonous tones, and speak freely of everything—of everything that morally concerns the people, as if he spoke for his life, or for the life of his friend. And it is for *more* than life that he speaks—for the welfare of a whole mighty people, and of unborn generations. For that welfare of the people never did, and never can,

depend upon anything but its virtue and piety. This is the only hope of future times. Yes, the presence of God must be among us—that pillar of cloud, and pillar of fire must accompany the march of coming generations, or they will wander, and be lost—like the nations that have ceased to be.

My friends, our work on earth will soon be done. That mighty procession, ere long, will pass by our graves. What matter is it that we shall sleep in the dust, if our work is done, and well done; if we have helped to raise up, in those that come after us, a mighty host of the intelligent, the virtuous, the happy, and free! This secured—and I see, in prospect, a land of peace and prosperity, a land of churches, and temples of science, and towers of strength; and the progress of the coming generations shows like a glorious triumph. Fair flowers shall be strewed in their path; bright omens shall cheer them on; they shall fulfil the prayers of the pious dead; they shall reward the tears and blood of martyred patriots; they shall accomplish the hopes of abased, broken, and prostrate humanity!

ON WAR.

Ecclesiastes ix. 18: "Wisdom is better than weapons of war."

My subject this evening is war; and my purpose is to consider it as an immense social evil, and one which the rising spirit of modern society is likely to control. The connexion between the two subjects is too obvious to be insisted on. But the system of war is connected with the great interests of society, in one way which, though less obvious, is, perhaps, more important than any other—I mean by the accumulation of national debts. War not only consumes the present possessions of mankind, but it uses up in advance, the property of future generations; it lays a burthen of taxes upon ages to come. How great this burthen is, and in how many ways it presses upon the social happiness and improvement of the world, are subjects, I think, which have not yet been sufficiently considered.

But before I enter on the general subject of the social evils produced by war, let me undertake briefly to state the ground I take with regard to it.

I do not say, then, in the first place, that war, under all circumstances, is wrong. A war strictly defensive, I hold, is right. But very few wars, I believe, will be found to possess this character. Yet when such a case does occur, I do not believe that any nation is obliged to sit still, and see its fields ravaged, and its homes violated, without lifting an arm in resistance. The right which nature gives us of personal self-defence, extends, I conceive, to the relations of states and kingdoms. If I may break the arm of a ruffian who lifts a club to destroy me, I may go farther, if necessary—I may break both his arms; and so long as he has a limb or a sense which can aid him to inflict upon me the evil he meditates, I may disable it; and thus I may go on defending myself, till the assailant himself is destroyed. So also may I defend others, whose life is committed to my protection. I should be a monster, and not a man, if I could sit still, and see a savage enter my doors, and murder my family before my eyes. But that savage, or that ruffian, is precisely the representative of an invading army.

Nor do the Scriptures, justly construed, speak any other language. They command us, indeed—but it is with the evident language of strong hyperbole—they command us, when smitten on one cheek, to turn the other; when robbed of our coat, to give our cloak; when compelled to go a mile, to go twain; and in fine, not resist evil, but to return good for evil; the sum of which is, that we are not to *retaliate* evil. No reasonable person can suppose it to be literally meant, that we are to resist not at all; that when a rude assailant thrusts his hand in our

face, we should not endeavour to put it aside; nay, that we should help him, and give him every facility, to work his brutal will upon us. Angry retaliation is forbidden, not mild and manly self-defence; and this distinction applies alike to public wars and private conflicts.

In the next place, I do not deny, that war has sometimes developed powerful energies and heroic virtues. They furnish, indeed, but a slight compensation to humanity for the sufferings of its slaughtered millions; they yield but a poor argument for war; yet their existence is not to be denied. The advocates of peace, I must think, have been too anxious to brand with dishonour everything connected with national conflicts. Let mere mercenary soldiership, let the rage of brutal passions in a battle, let the ordinary principles of martial ambition be given up to their reprobation; but let not him who draws the sword for justice, when nothing else can secure justice—who offers his life for the freedom of a people, when no meaner sacrifice on its altar will suffice,—let not him be denied the virtue of heroism. Let not him who firmly takes his station before an invading foe; who stands forward and offers his breast a shield for helpless age and infancy, and the sanctity of a nation's homes; let not him be denied the praise of magnanimity. Of those, indeed, who make war their trade, and boast, and pleasure, a different judgment is to be formed.

But, if a hostile army were landed on our shores, and I saw the youth of a peaceful village hurrying from their homes to prepare for the dread encounter of arms; if I saw them mustering on some green spot, which they had trodden lightly on many a gay and peaceful holiday, but which they now trod with the step of brave and beautiful manhood—abjuring all softness, all fondness; girding on the armour of battle; and, sadly but sternly, resolved to sacrifice that young life, in its first freshness, to save their household altars from violation—if I saw them stand there, as they have stood in the valleys of Switzerland, and on the plains of America, resolute and firm, with flushed cheek and unflinching brow, ready to do what God and their country should demand of them, I should feel that I looked upon a noble spectacle. And when that goodly band returned from the conflict—broken, alas! and shattered—loud and grateful should be a nation's welcome; and green should be the sod, and wet with patriot tears, that covered the fallen; and high should rise the monument, to tell to other days, of brave men, who feared not to die for justice and freedom! Life, indeed, is dear, and the probation of human souls is not to be lightly shortened: but we are not to forget that that probation may sometimes be wrought out through blood; and that there are things dearer than life—things, to which life may be well sacrificed, whether in labours of philanthropy, in the fires of martyrdom, or in the strife of battle!

These are qualifications which, I think, we ought to make in considering the subject of war. It is not of a war of self-defence, or for the defence of freedom, that I am about to speak; but of war in its ordinary character, where the impulse is mutual national hatred or jealousy, and the object something far short of the freedom, safety, or essential welfare of any people. The qualifications I have made, therefore, will very little affect the general estimate.

To that estimate I now proceed, and particularly with reference to its bearing upon the social welfare of mankind.

But I wish to invite your attention, in the first place, to the peculiar, the extraordinary character of this dispensation of misery. The history of the human race presents us with many things to wonder at, with things that bear the character of extravagance, absurdity, and almost of insanity; but it presents us with nothing so amazing as the system of war.

It appears, sometimes, in surveying this part of history, as if the most settled and established principles were failing us; and we are tempted to ask—Is human happiness worth the price at which it is commonly estimated? Is it, in fact, worth anything?

If it is, what are we to think of a vast and portentous science and system ordained for its destruction? Other calamities come upon us by means that are indirect and unforeseen, and often irresistible. They lie in wait for us, and smite us unawares; or they follow us at a distance, and overtake us at an hour when we think not; they steal upon the path of indolence; they rush upon the footsteps of improvidence; they overwhelm the victim of indulgence in the very house, the guarded home of his pleasures. But what destroying power, what angel of death, besides war, has gone forth in the sight of all men, and marked and measured out the field of destruction, and bared the human breast, shrinking, as it naturally does, from every wound—bared it to a shock, like that of battle?

Other evils there are, and enough of them, to which the human race must submit. They lurk in the tainted breeze, and in the most secret channels of life, in pains which no weapon inflicts, and in sufferings which no sympathy can relieve. But war is like none of these.

And even of those calamities which men bring upon themselves, not one, in the treatment of it, bears any comparison with this. The cup of excess has, indeed, slain as many as the sword of violence. But when was ever a system devised, to facilitate and extend the ravages of intemperance? When was ever a book written; when did human ingenuity ever deliberately set itself to plan the means by which intemperance could kill the greatest number; by which it could inflict a yet more insufferable degradation; by which it would widen and deepen the tide of misery? Nay, and even in those cases where mischief and misery have been reduced to a system and trade, the system has been taught, and the trade has been carried on, silently and secretly. Gaming-houses, and houses of yet darker ignominy, have been builded, it is true, and books have been written, to teach the desperate practice of the one, or to lure to the deadly haunts of the other; but over all these works of darkness a veil like that of midnight has been drawn, to hide them from the public eye.

But there is one theatre where death stands unveiled, and "destruction has no covering;" where they do their fearful work, not only designedly but openly: and with such credit, too, that that theatre is called the field of honour. There men are not only destroyed in troops, in battalions, and armies, but they are destroyed by system, and killed by science. Yes, and for this field, weapons are skilfully prepared, and actors are adroitly trained: and that, too, at establishments which, even in a time of peace, cost tenfold more than all the universities, and hospitals, and beneficent asylums in the world. War, in fact, is among the recognised arts that engage the attention of mankind. But while,

of all other arts, the design is to save and bless, to improve and to delight, this is emphatically the art of destruction; to crush and to kill, to lay waste kingdoms, to spread havoc and distress among nations—this is its chosen work. Were the art brought to still greater perfection, to that horrible perfection indicated by some late experiments, and were some machinery, some "infernal engine" invented, by whose tremendous discharge a whole army might be destroyed in a moment, success in tactics like this might open the eyes of the world to the enormity of the martial principle. Then might war, at last, after having for ages raged through the earth, desolating empires, and destroying generations, become its own destroyer.

But no such fortunate catastrophe has yet come. Still war rages, with a violence only too impotent either to satisfy the passions of men, on the one hand, or, on the other, to destroy itself. If we must judge from the history of the last fifty years, civilization has not weakened its power. If it has done something to tame the fierceness of anger and revenge, it has more than balanced the account by the invention of deadlier engines. Europe never saw such bloody fields of battle as within the last fifty years.

But let us further, and more distinctly, contemplate the immediate evils and sufferings produced by war. The great difficulty about this subject is, that no such contemplation is likely to be given to it. Nobody seems to stand in the relation to it which is necessary to a fair and full estimate. From those engaged in war, blinded or absorbed by it, its true character is hidden; and to those in the bosom of peace, the contemplation of bloody conflicts and routed armies is scarcely more affecting, than to behold the dashing clouds and broken fragments of a dispersing storm in the sky—it is far off, and belongs to another element. But let a man bring home to him one single instance from that awful and uncounted aggregate of horrors, and how can he be unmoved by it! Death! come when and where it may, be it on the bed of down, or on the supporting bosom of affection—it is an awful visitation. The agonies and shudderings of nature proclaim it to be the great trial-hour of human destiny. But that hour—in the hot assault, or amidst the lingering agonies of the battle-field, or where the groans of the crowded hospital are its harbingers—how does it come? No pillow of down, no supporting arms are there to receive the victim; no kind voice speaks to him; no noiseless step of affection approaches, nor looks of love hang over him, like a pitying angel's countenance; but he goes down—man as he is, with all a man's sensibility, it may be with all a man's ties to earthly home and love—he goes down amidst groans, and execrations, and horrors darker than the shadow of death that is passing over him. This is but one death, such as war visits upon the human race; and yet it would not be in human nature actually to witness one such instance, without the most agonizing desire to afford relief. But now, what facts are those which the history of war unfolds to us? The single campaign of Buonaparte in Russia carried death, and such death! not to one thousand, nor to five thousand, nor to fifty thousand, but to five hundred thousand human beings. Alexander and Cæsar, it is computed, caused each of them the death of two millions of the human race; and the wars of Buonaparte bring up the whole number of victims sacrificed to the ambition of THREE MEN, to six millions! Let us look

at it. Six millions of human beings!—the aged, the young, the manly and strong, the fair and lovely, the imploring mother, the innocent child—and death, dealt to each one, without discrimination and without mercy! Six millions! a number equal to half the population of this whole country. Strike off, then, half of the territory and people of this fair and happy land, and suppose them to be sacrificed one by one, their possessions, their goods, and their lives, with every species of cruelty and insult, and with the perpetration of every nameless horror; and to whom sacrificed? To but three ministers in the dark kingdom of war! But this is only an item, a single passage in the history of its fearful dominion. There have been in Christendom, since the reign of Constantine, nearly *three hundred wars!** What a mass of calamities, of rapine and violence, of crime and misery, is included within the brief description of these three words—what waste of the treasures of nations; what woe in the abodes of millions, it passes all human power to calculate! But all this, nevertheless, has been experienced, though it cannot be calculated or imagined. *Human hearts have felt it all.* Not one drop of this ocean of ills but has fallen, a burning drop, upon nerves and fibres that have quivered with agony at its touch. Fourteen centuries of war, and thousands of bloody battles, recorded in that brief description, are but the record of human, of individual sorrows, and tears, and groans.

I wish it were possible for me to make the case more apparent and palpable. That beings possessed with the most exquisite sensibility to grief and pain, should be able to look on, calmly or patiently, while such things are done and suffered, only proves that the reality of the evil is lost to them in its vastness. Any wound inflicted in our sight, any pain depicted in the countenance of another, "any annoyance" in any "precious sense," fills us with solicitude and sympathy. The mother, in the midnight hour, steals to the couch of her child, if but a harder breathing invade "the innocent sleep." The child hangs over the couch of infirm and reverend age, with a filial piety that counts every pain as a holy thing. The friend sits through the live-long night, with watchful eye and ear, to anticipate the slightest want of a sick and suffering associate. These are but the dictates of humanity. Where are those dictates, when a system is fostered and honoured in the world, which tears shrieking children from their arms to be murdered by a brutal soldiery; which tramples the aged and venerable head beneath the feet of lawless strangers; and from whose wide theatre are for ever rising groans that are unpitied, and cries that bring no aid. "On one side," says an eye-witness to the horrors of the sack of Moscow, in 1812, "on one side, we saw a son carrying a sick father; on the other, women who poured the torrent of their tears on the infants whom they clasped in their arms. Old men, overwhelmed by grief still more than by years, weeping for the ruin of their country, lay down to die, near the houses where they were born. No respect was paid to the nobility of blood, to the innocence of youth, or to the tears of beauty."†—"It is impossible," says another eye-witness, one who saw the wounded in the

* See Third Report of the Committee of Inquiry instituted by the Massachusetts Peace Society.

† Labaume, p. 209 and 213.

hospitals after the battle of Waterloo, "it is impossible to conceive of their sufferings. Turn which way I might, I encountered every form of entreaty from those whose condition left no need of words to stir compassion. I know not," he says, "what notions my feeling countrymen have of thirty thousand wounded men thrown into a town and its environs. They still their compassionate emotions by subscriptions: but what avails this to those who would exchange gold for a bit of rag to bind up their smarting wounds. My heart sickens at the contemplation," he says, in conclusion; "and I am obliged to turn away from this picture of human misery, caused by pride, ambition, a love of military glory, and the folly of mankind in paying adoration to their destroyers. Would not angels weep at such a scene as this? But is this all? Ah! no. Each of these dead or wounded soldiers had a mother, who had watched over his cradle, and had attended him in his sickness, and shed over him the tears of maternal solicitude. Many had wives and lovers, to whom they were dearer than the light of the sun; many had children, who looked to them for support and protection. We may rationally suppose, that for every man who was killed or wounded in this deadly conflict, the hearts of at least ten persons—parents, wives children, brothers, and sisters—were lacerated. Oh, what hecatombs of sacrifices on the bloody altar of Moloch! How long will mankind continue to be accessary to such crimes, by bestowing praises upon their perpetrators! How long will it be, ere every human being will deem it his imperious and solemn duty, to disseminate the principles of peace and extend her empire!"*

But let us pass now from immediate evils to those which, although more remote, are not less destructive to the welfare of society.

In contemplating the progress of civilization, there is one fact which deserves more attention, I apprehend, than it has yet received; and that is the severity of human labour. The advancement of society from a state of barbarism is, of course, marked by growing and more regular industry. To a certain extent, this is, doubtless, natural, and accordant with the designs of Providence and the general welfare of men. But there is a point beyond which labour is not good and ought not to be necessary; and that the condition of multitudes, both in Europe and America, is far beyond this point, cannot, I think, be doubted. It has been maintained, on a careful calculation, that all the conveniences of civilized life might be produced, if society would divide the labour equally among its members, by each individual being employed in labour two hours during the day.† I will not undertake to say whether this estimate is correct; but I am certain that ten, twelve, and fourteen hours each day, of hard work, cannot be necessary to the proper ends of society, in its natural and healthful state. Yet this is what is required of the mass, not only of adult labourers, but of their children too, in many cases, barely to support life. The effects, especially in the manufacturing districts of Europe, are most deplorable. The evidence on this point before the British Parliament, three or four years since, presented a picture of desolating and crushing toil, and especially of children, pale, emaciated, trembling from exhaustion, and bereft of every trait of childhood, and almost of humanity, that was enough to

* Charles Bell. † Godwin's Political Justice.

make the heart sick with the contemplation; and all the mitigation that the wisdom and generosity of a great people could devise for these helpless and miserable beings, cursed—I had almost said—cursed with existence, was, that they should not be compelled, under the age of sixteen, to work more than ten hours a day. But the evil of excessive toil is not confined to the manufactories. No one can travel through the agricultural districts of Europe generally, without seeing that it is not only in "the sweat of his brow," but in the sadness of his brow, that man earns his bread. The pressure is, doubtless, lighter in this country, but still, I believe, it is too hard. I concern myself here with no questions about combinations of labourers, to diminish the hours of work; I do not undertake to say, what may be necessary or right, in the existing state of things; but speaking in general, of what I conceive to be the intentions of Providence and the capacities of man, I aver with confidence, that there is more hard labour in this country than consists with the true welfare and improvement of society.

If this could be doubted, it would be sufficient to say, and this is the point to which I wish to come, that there are causes in operation enhancing human toil, which are immense, which are unnatural, and which never ought to have existed. Passing by others, my business now is, to consider a single cause—the burthen of debt, that is to say, which past wars have accumulated upon the present generation, and upon many, we may add, that are to come after it.

War subtracts from the amount of productive labour, the strength of all who are engaged in its actual service, and of all who are engaged in providing arms and munitions for it. In barbarous ages, when nations fought out their own battles, and so finished the account, this was only a loss to the nation and to the world, for the time being; but in process of time, men found that they could not fight enough on their own account, and they brought in the resources of after-times to assist them. It was left for the progress of civilization, to fall upon the expedient of creating national debts; that is, of hiring out the labour of posterity to pay the price of blood. Some idea of the extent of this tremendous assessment may be formed from a single item. The wars which grew out of the French Revolution, commencing in 1793, and ending in 1815, cost Great Britain alone, eleven hundred millions of pounds sterling:* and a large proportion of this stupendous amount now exists in the form of a national debt; and the interest of it is annually levied upon the entire industry of the kingdom. In addition to this, England and all Europe are supporting immense standing armies. Go where you will, and the soldier presents himself—a cormorant that is eating up the substance of the land, and adding nothing to its resources. There he stands, idly leaning against some bastion or gate-way, while the farmer in the neighbouring field must redouble his labours to support him. I complain not of the soldier, who is, after all, the most miserable of these parties; insomuch, that I have heard it stated, as the opinion of a distinguished military commander in Europe, that war itself is not so fatal to life as peace—that ennui destroys more men than the sword; I do not complain, then, of the soldier who is the creature of the state; I do not complain of the state, which is, perhaps, obliged thus to stand on its defence; but I charge the system, the war-system,

* Lowe's Present State of England.

which taxes and tasks the industry of one part of the world for the purpose of destroying the other, with stupendous injustice and folly.

Let us dwell a moment longer on the extent and nature of this taxation.

War appears to be far off from us; and it is far off from most men; for the field of actual military operations, in almost any country, is comparatively small. A battle is fought at a distance, and the groan that it sends through the world soon dies away; and men think of it no more, but as a matter of history—a matter with which they have no concern. They forget that the war, the battle, comes to them in another shape, in the form of burthensome imposts; that it comes and writes its account on every threshold, and on every table, whether rich or poor, in the civilized world. For every article, whether of convenience or luxury, which is produced in Europe, the consumer, *of whatever country*, is obliged not only to remunerate the labour employed upon it, but to pay a heavy additional per cent in taxes; and far the largest portion of these taxes are levied by the military system. The language of every military government, not only to its own citizens, but to all the world, is this: "You must not only pay the industrious among us, but you must help to support our idle and expensive soldiery;" that is to say, "you must work harder, because we have a great many among us who do not work, and then, too, they must have arms, and munitions, and fortifications, which is another heavy item in the account." "Does this taxation do us any good?" the world asks. And the answer is, "none at all." It contributes not to the manufacture of any necessaries, or comforts, or luxuries of life, but only to the fabrication of warlike weapons—of "cold and bare steel"—of that which gives you nothing to eat nor to drink, nor to wear, nor to employ for any useful purpose. And again; it contributes nothing to the support of any useful class—of learned men, or instructors of the people, or artists to delight them; but only to the training of an order of men, who, for your pains may, any day, be turned upon you like tigers and bloodhounds, to rend and tear you in pieces. And now, look at the pressure of this system. It is a burthen upon everything to which men can attach value; it is a tax upon all the possessions and pleasures of life, upon food and raiment, upon every element of nature, upon the very light of heaven. It presses upon you and upon me. But for this, our labours might contribute in much greater measure to our comfort and independence; in a measure very seriously and sensibly affecting the happiness of our lives. It is a burthen which presses heavily on the rich; it is a burthen which crushes the poor; it is urging universal toil to excess; it is grinding thousands and millions down to the dust; and in this way, perhaps, it has occasioned more of the extraordinary intemperance of modern times than any other cause. If this tax were direct and specific; if it were not covered up under the names of excise, and impost, and revenue; if it were, in so many words, a war-tax, it would speak a language to which the world could not be indifferent; it would be a voice of blood crying from the earth and air, from sea and land, to which men could not close their ears.

But consider for one moment longer, I beseech you, the nature of this assessment. In the name of Heaven, I solemnly ask, what are its conditions? What is the tenor of the bond that is to settle up the ac-

count of an expensive war? A mighty debt is incurred; and it presses upon the already hard and exhausting labour of thousands and ten thousands, with vexatious and wearying importunity. What is the valuable consideration which is to reconcile to their lot the worn and and weary victims of this toil and poverty? What is the language to them of the war-system? It says to them—this is what it says—"I will raze to the ground your pleasant habitations; I will slay your sons in battle; I will give up your daughters to accursed violation; I will spare no store of your gains, no treasure of your hearts, no delight of your eyes; and when I have done all this, you shall pay me for what I have done; and to satisfy the debt, you shall come under bondage to me, for a portion of every day, during the remainder of your lives. Nay, and more than this shall you give; more than the toil of your weary limbs, and the sweat of your aching brow. The light from your window, and the pottage from your cold hearth; the sorrow of your suffering wives and children, the tears of your half-clad and starving families, shall you give to pay the mighty debt."

It is sometimes asked, whether wars can ever be done away. I would ask, in return, if the very argument I have now used, does not show that they can, and must, and shall be done away.

There is, I know, a vague and dreamy notion possessing some minds, that war, somehow or other, is a matter of necessity, that it results from the ordination of nature, that the law of force is the law of the whole creation, and must be submitted to. Among animals, they say, the stronger destroys the weaker, and man but conforms to the principle. But the instance of animal nature comes far short of supporting this argument. The animal destroys when and where he has need of food; and when he destroys without this motive, he is accounted mad. But what should we think, if the animals of one whole country were banded in battle array against those of another? The world would stand aghast at such madness seizing the tribes of irrational creatures. And yet, what in them would be a horrible madness, is, in man, honour, courage, skill; nay more, and is held to be among the necessary and irresistible tendencies of his nature.

"But," it may be said, "whether natural and necessary, or not, war has always existed; it has been in the world since the creation; it has become the habit of the world; and it cannot be done away. There will always be national controversies; there will always be selfish and vindictive passions at work in the human breast; and, in short, while man is man, there will always be war."

Do we live in an age, when the antiquity of an evil is held to be a good argument for its perpetuity? Arbitrary rule, despotism, in one form or another, is as old as the world. The slave-trade has existed for ages. The most ancient histories are histories of ignorance and barbarism. Does the world sit down and quietly acquiesce in the conclusion, that these things must exist for ever? Civilization itself must have been held in check, by such a fatal concession to antiquity.

Civilization is advancing; it has as yet by no means reached its limit. Is not this a sufficient answer to the whole argument? One barbarous custom after another has yielded to the progress of knowledge; why may not war, like the tournament and the ordeal by fire, cease to en-

gage the respect of mankind? The habits of the world are not too strong to be controverted and corrected. But there is another point on which I intended especially to insist. There is *one habit* of the world, signalizing more than any other the present age, which, if it continues to gain strength, is almost certain to effect, sooner or later, the abolition of war; and that is the habit, which the people of all civilized countries are now acquiring, *of looking soberly and steadfastly to their own real interests.* Let them look at these, and resolutely pursue them, and they must, ere long, banish the horrible custom which, every century, costs the lives of millions, and brings distress and anguish upon millions more. War may be the interest of ambitious rulers, but it never can be the interest of the body of the people.

In connexion with this point, let it be distinctly considered, that public opinion is becoming the grand and paramount law of nations. It has always had great force. It has had great force even in the most despotic states. But what distinguishes the present crisis is, that public opinion is becoming the absolute and universal law. The aim of all liberal minds, everywhere, is to make government the very expression of an enlightened public opinion. So it ought to be. They ought to be represented by a government; their feelings and wishes ought to be respected, whose interests, whose life, and property, and happiness, are entrusted to that government to be benefited or injured by it. They ought to judge, their opinion ought to prevail, who are themselves the parties interested. But, now, what is public opinion? Not the opinion of rulers, not the opinion of military men, nor the opinion of a few whose interest it might be, or rather who might think it their interest, to plunge a nation into war; but it is the collected opinion of the whole mass of a people; it is an opinion to which both sexes contribute an influence, which springs from all the relations and endearments of society; it is an opinion, whose dwelling is the happy home, whose altar is the domestic hearth-stone. And is it possible, when this public opinion arrives at its proper ascendancy, that nations shall wish to lay open their peaceful villages and their happy homes to the invasion of fire and sword, and all the horrors of war? Is it possible, that they will choose to suffer all this to gratify an insane, unnatural, and merciless ambition, which builds itself up upon their destruction; whose monuments are heaps of the slain; whose tower of pride is built of human bones, and cemented with the blood of brethren and the tears of widows and orphans; whose shrine of glory, like that of Moloch, for ever demands human—none but human victims? Can men, when once they begin to think, bear all this, and above all, can they bear it, when they see that it answers no useful purpose; when they find that negociation is just as necessary after the conflict as it was before; when they find that nothing is gained for abstract justice, and everything is lost to social life, to vital prosperity, to domestic happiness. Look at two nations dwelling in amity with each other; each land filled with cities and temples, with smiling villages and peaceful dwellings, the homes of centuries. Behold the thousand paths of industry and enjoyment, whether upon the hill-side or upon the gliding river's bosom, thronged with the prosperous and happy. Hear the song of the reaper in the harvest-field, answering joyously to the call of the herdsman in the pasture; and if a sigh ariseth by the way-side, mark the ready ear of the kind and gentle to listen to

it. Survey, in short, the lot—and be it that it is the mingled lot—of life, joyous or sad, but ever dear and holy. Trace, in fine, the invisible bond of sympathy that binds home to home and heart to heart, and gaze upon the broad land and its many shores, where the light of peace falls upon every field, and every wave, to hallow it, as it were, with the serenest and the sweetest smile of heaven. Now, I ask, if, for a controversy about a tract of land, or a contested right in a fishery, or an affront offered to an ambassador, the people of these countries—not their rulers as independent of them—but if the people, expressing their will through governments of their own choice, can be disposed to enter into war; to drive the ploughshare of ruin through all these peaceful and happy scenes; to turn the joyous songs of ten thousand dwellings into sighing and wailing; to plant the bloody step on every green turf, and to thrust the violating hand into the retreats of every domestic sanctuary—it cannot be—men cannot be for ever so insane, as to treat their dearest interests in this manner. At any rate, if the tendencies of public sentiment, at this day, hold out any warrant, if the hopes of philanthropy and piety are not mere illusions, if the ways of God's providence are not darkened with a cloud that is never to clear up, the time must come, the time will come, when wars will cease.

As certainly as popular governments are to rise in the world, wars are to decline. And they are to rise: I say not in what form, but in some form by which they shall express the will of the people. If there ever was a tendency in human affairs, the tendency of all opinion, of all moral action, of all instruments and agencies in the world, is to this result: and when it is obtained, it may be relied on for the establishment of some new and more rational mode of settling national controversies. I say not what it may be in form; it may be by arbitration, by resorting to umpires, or by creating a court of nations; but whatever be the mode, I look to an intelligent and moral public opinion for the fulfilment of that great prophecy, that men "shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, that nation shall not lift up sword against nation, and they shall learn war no more."

ON POLITICAL MORALITY.

PROVERBS xiv. 34: "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

THERE is a branch of morality, seldom discussed in the pulpit, too seldom discussed out of it, which I shall propose for your consideration this evening: it is political morality. It will not be thought, I trust, that any apology is due from the pulpit for taking up this subject. If the duty which one man owes to another, then the duty which each man owes to a whole country, is worthy of the most religious consideration: and the more so, because it is not only an important but a neglected subject.

Indeed, one is tempted to ask—scarcely with irony—is there any such subject, any such thing, as political morality? There is a law of nations, binding them to perform certain duties to each other; there is a law of the land, binding upon the citizens of each particular nation; there is a law of morality, penetrating deeper into the life and heart than judicial law can go. But is there anything of this, or anything like this, applicable to politics? On the contrary, are not political relations entirely severed from the obligations of conscience? Into almost every part of a man's life conscience may look, ay, and with an eye of authority; but with the part which he acts as a politician, is it not true, that conscience has no business whatever? As a *man*, he is bound to be a good man; and in that character he is amenable to the judgment of God. As a *man*, he is bound to be honest, candid, high-minded, and true; but would it not be quite preposterous to demand this of him, as a president, a governor, a diplomatist, a party-man, an opposition-man? In a party conclave, you can easily conceive that questions may be discussed on grounds of *policy*; but would it not be quite surprising, if not ridiculous, for a man to get up and say, "Is this right? is it conscientious? is it a high-minded course?" Would not the look of silent astonishment, in such a conclave, say, as plainly as anything can say, "that is *another* question"? "Speak not evil one of another," is a holy precept; but can it be that it has any relation to newspapers? Especially in a warm party contest, as in a battle, are not all laws of mutual forbearance and kindness abrogated; and is not the only consideration then, how to strike down an adversary? May not a man do things and avow principles then, which would disgrace him in the ordinary walks of life? May he not violate the law, by bringing minors and non-residents to vote? May he not give and take bribes? Nay, may he not lift his hand to heaven, and perjure himself in such a cause? In fine, will not the end sanctify the means? It is a very bad principle everywhere else; but will it not do in politics?

The great modern master of dramatic representation shows his nice

observation of human nature, when, in a case of false swearing, he makes a man say, "I will swear to anything: all is fair when it comes to an oath *ad litem*." That technical and, to him, unmeaning phrase, is probably introduced by the writer as serving the purpose of a salve to his conscience; as helping to blind him to the iniquity of the transaction. And so it is with the technical word, politics. And men say, or act as if they said, "all is fair when it comes to politics." Even in case of the oath, wherewith a man perjures himself at the ballot; what is it that he says to himself, or that the partisan tempter says to him? "Oh! it is nothing but an electioneering oath." In other words, *all is fair when it comes to politics.*

A part of the reason here involved, doubtless, that is to say, a part of the reason why politics possess this morally loose character, lies in the vagueness of the term. The words, trade, bargain; or the words, charity, philanthropy, have a definite meaning affixed to them. But men cannot so readily *tell* what they mean by the word, politics; and to this subject, therefore, it is less easy to apply the principle of morality.

Another reason, having a similar tendency to blind the mind to the necessary moral discriminations in politics, is to be found in the unusual modes and forms devised for the expression of public opinion. If a man is false to his thought, when he professes to convey his thought in conversation, he at once feels that he is dishonest; he sees at once the contradiction between what he says and what he thinks. But when he gives his vote at the ballot-box, or causes it to be recorded in a legislative assembly, it is comparatively an artificial act, and he does not so clearly perceive its character and relations. He does, indeed, in that act, profess to declare an opinion—he does profess to declare his mind—but what is it, in *form*, to him? It is a vote, not an averment; it is saying, "yea," or "nay," not saying, "I believe," or "I do not believe."

There is another consideration to be stated, of the same general and dangerous tendency. The action of men in masses always lessens the sense of individual responsibility. Thus a mob will do things which no individual of that mob would ever think of doing alone: and this, not because he *could* not do it alone; for any man can break windows, or shoot down his adversary in the streets; the truth is, the man loses in the crowd the sense of personal responsibility; and so it is with political combinations. A private man, a merchant, or a lawyer, would feel degraded if he should offer a bribe to induce his neighbour to express a favourable opinion of him personally, or if he should threaten him with a loss of business for failing to do so; but he will resort to either of these methods for procuring the same expression of opinion towards some public man—some politician, or party man.

I have thus been led briefly to state some of the causes of that separation of morality from politics, which obtains to a fearful extent in the public mind. No more than a bare statement of them is necessary to show that they lack all proper grounds of justification for the result which they have produced. The way is open, therefore, for an attempt to settle some principles in the science of political morality.

Political morality may be considered in relation, first, to particular actions which it enjoins or forbids; and, secondly, to the general principles which it sanctions or disclaims.

Under the first head is to be ranked, the duty of giving a vote at the elections. I hold, that it is the duty of every legally qualified person in the country to vote. And let it not be thought, that this point is in any way well settled in the public mind. Expedient it may have been thought, in some party emergency, that every citizen should vote; and at such a crisis, that expediency may have been much talked of; but all this is a very different thing from a sense of duty, which pervades all times. The emergency passes, and this shallow feeling of expediency passes away with it. It is the bond of duty to which I appeal.

There are reasons for it, founded in the very nature and meaning of the action. Suffrage is the very basis of our government. The government in this country is committed to the whole people; every man has a share in it; every man exerts an influence upon it, either by his action or by his neglect. Can this be a case, then, in which a man is allowed to stand neutral?

In theory, the government here represents the whole people. The practice should conform to that theory. To every man among us, a certain political trust is committed. Every man should acquit himself of that trust. If the administration of our affairs is corrupt or incompetent, the people are to blame—the whole people: the blame is to be shared among them all; but especially does it attach to those who say that the government is bad, and will do nothing to make it better. "Why stand ye idle all the day?" may it well be said to such. Why stand ye idle all the election-day? When, on such a day, ye see the thousand and the million contributions that are made to swell the mighty stream of public opinion and government, why stand ye idly gazing upon it, as if it did not concern you? As well might ye stand idly gazing upon the streams collecting in the hills above your dwelling, which at any moment may come down, and sweep its foundations from beneath you.

If it be said that that is unlikely to happen, then let me say in turn, and to keep the figure for a moment, that those streams *will* come down, either to fertilize or to waste the land; and they *shall* be the power, either good or bad, to grind the very corn that feeds your families and your neighbourhoods. If government does not make the corn *grow*, yet it touches everything that affects its value—labour, price, manufacture—yes, it touches the very staff of life; and that by many means, by many statutes, besides "corn-laws." Government, then, is something that comes near to us. We greatly err, if we suppose, as many seem to do, that it is something factitious and far off. It comes near to us—to our warehouses and our fire-sides, to our granaries and our kneading-troughs. Revenues and tariffs, banking-laws and the monetary system—these terms may sound like a strange speech to the mass of the people; but they represent, and they vitally affect, their daily and home-bred interests.

And these interests, I say again, are committed to the whole people. They are directly affected by legislation certainly; and legislation comes from the whole people. It is not with us as if our rulers were hereditary. Then we might fold our arms, and say, "it is none of our concern." And why? Because in that case, we should *not* be the governors; but now we *are* the governors of the country. And if any portion of us—if, for instance, a tenth part of our population, refuse to

give due attention to this duty, it is as if the chosen governors of the country should withhold a tenth part of the talent or of the time due to their office.

I do not demand of any one, that he should be an eager and noisy politician. I only demand that he should vote; that he should, no matter how quietly, thus express his interest and take his share in the commonweal—thus assume, what he professes to prize so highly, the privilege and duty of self-government. But I am obliged to say, and I hardly know whether it is with greater mortification or the more profound concern, that the very persons among us who are most apt to neglect this duty, are the very persons most of all bound to fulfil it—I mean the rich and the educated. It is a statement most fearful in its bearing on the prospects of the country, but it is true. I do not deny that many of both classes are found at their posts, when their country calls upon them. But there are rich men, who are too much engrossed with their business to give their vote—too much engrossed with gain to attend to their duty; or who, perchance, are too fastidious to expose their persons amidst the throng at the polls. And there are educated men, who are so much disgusted with party strifes, that they will have nothing to do with them. They give them up, as they scornfully say, to demagogues and brawlers; and so very simple are these sensible and refined persons, that they do not seem to perceive, when they say this, that they are giving up their *country* to demagogues and brawlers. Yes, their *country!* And here it is, too, on the very side where it most needs support, that its legitimate defenders on that side are opening their ranks to the onset and the rushing crowd of popular ignorance and party violence. "Fools and blind!"—would it be said, should they be overwhelmed by that crowd—"that did not perceive that they too had interests at stake—that very property, that very repose, which they so much valued. For when the crowd came, what did it find? Not good and manly citizens at their post; but only certain moneychangers in their counting-houses, or silken loungers in drawing-rooms, or certain learned monks in their cloisters!" I do not fear any such violent and Vandal incursion of popular ignorance and passion; and yet *if* anything is to overwhelm the country, it will be this. If there is any one thing more to be feared than any other—any one overshadowing peril to our political institutions, it is, that *numerical force* will overbalance the *intellectual and moral strength* of the country. I say again, that I do not fear it—except with that fear which bringeth safety. I do not fear it, because I trust that events are teaching intelligent and educated men their duties; and because I believe, that into the numerical force, otherwise so much to be dreaded, there is a constantly increasing, and will be a still larger infusion of, intelligence.* But if it shall be otherwise; if population is to outstrip education; if *numbers*, and not *principles*, are to be the watchwords and war-cries of party, and the governing powers of the state, the dreaded result is inevitable.

In connexion with this topic, there is a question often raised concerning a certain educated class in the country, to which I shall give a moment's attention. This question is—ought the clergy to vote? And

* Not in cities, perhaps, from temporary causes; but in the country at large.

to this question I firmly answer, yes; always and everywhere. This is a right which they ought never to suffer to be drawn into debate. It is enough that they are, by public opinion, nearly disfranchised, and that absurdly enough, of their natural right to hold offices under the government.* We hear much of freedom, and invasions of freedom, in this country. What would any other respectable class of citizens say, if they were excluded from all active share and interest in the government? They would fill the country with their complaints, and the world would be called upon to look at this monstrous anomaly in our free institutions. I shall be at no pains here to say, that the clergy probably do not desire public employment. Whether they do or not, is not the question. I say that they have a right to it, as much as any other class; and the frequent language of reproach and satire heard, on every assumption of this right, I hold to be disgraceful to a free press and people. But the question now is about suffrage. And on this point, I maintain, that for the clergy to cast their vote with the rest of their fellow-citizens at the elections, is not only their right, but their bounden duty. Nor should their congregations, in manly candour, ever desire to deprive them of this right, or to dictate to them in regard to the discharge of this duty. This is not a country—a republican government is the last in the world—that can afford to part with the influence of a large and intelligent body of its citizens.

I have dwelt longer than I intended upon this first and foundation principle of our political morality—that which requires every legally qualified citizen to give his vote at the elections. There is another duty coincident with this, which is too obvious to call for much argument, and yet too often violated to be passed over in silence; and that is the duty of giving an *honest* vote.

Every citizen in this primary act that gives its being and character to the government, is bound to express his honest conviction. The vote demands the contribution of his mind, of his judgment, of his patriotism and fidelity to the commonweal. The citizen is the real governor.—And if the elected ruler is forbidden, by every just principle, to swerve from an honest purpose towards the public good, so is the ruling elector; and he who surrenders his judgment or conscience to private interest, or the mere dictation of a party; he who accepts a bribe or offers one; he who, in the ballot, smothers his own conviction, or attempts to coerce another's, is perjured in the holiest rites with which he swears upon his country's altar.

The familiarity with which certain transactions at the polls are spoken of—yes, palpable infractions of the law with regard to the age, residence, and, where a property qualification is required, the property of voters—the freedom with which parties charge these practices upon each other after an election—are facts of evil omen. And the common defence set up for them is, if possible, worse than the things themselves. The country, we are constantly told, is in danger; every nerve must be strained, every means used, to carry certain measures; the opposite party leave no means, however flagitious and desperate, untried, and we must meet them on their own ground—must fight them with their own weapons. Admirable doctrine! that goes around the whole circuit

* They are so by law in some of the States.

of parties, and lends a handle to each one, wherewith to push on the cumulative argument for dishonesty and intrigue! The country in danger!—and to be saved by corruption, by bribery, false swearing, and the violated law! The nation, sick and prostrate by the tampering of some ignorant administration with its health and vigour—and how to be cured? By the canker and the gangrene that are eating out its very vitals!

Away with such paltering and paltry arguments for the expedient against the right! If it must be so, I had rather my country were destroyed by truth, than saved by falsehood. I would rather it were ruined by virtue, than redeemed by corruption. But do not the very terms of this statement show, that it is not so? No; "honesty is the best policy" for man or nation, for individual or party. But if honesty is anywhere to be demanded or expected, it is in the first act that gives its character to the government—the *elections*. Admit any false principle there, and what, in consistency, can you look for but a corrupt government? Will you poison the fountain head, and expect the streams to be pure?

I insist, then, that the elector shall be honest. He should no more dare to be false to his own mind, false to his conscience, in giving his vote, than he would in giving his word. His vote *is* his word; and the only word, perhaps, that he *can* speak in the great ear of the nation. If that word is a lie, he sacrifices, as far as in him is, the right government and rectitude of the country.

We have now attended to one branch of our specific political duties, the morality of elections—binding every citizen to vote, and every citizen to vote honestly. The other department of specific morality embraces the duties of the elected—of legislators and magistrates.

And here, I must confess, that the tone of public sentiment on this subject—the admission, almost universal, that legislators and magistrates when elected will act, and must be expected to act, for sinister ends—is one at which I tremble. If this charge were the offspring of mere party recrimination, I could understand it, and could look upon it with comparative indifference. But the truth is, that the charge has been bandied about, between parties, till it has become resolved into a general maxim, or a maxim, at least, of frightful prevalence among the people. If the allegation were only, that every administration is liable to be corrupt, and does sometimes lean to party ends—against such a fact, arising from the weakness of human nature, I could bear up; but when, by four out of five of all the men you meet, of all parties, it is sapiently or carelessly said, that "all is corrupt in the government;" that "in Congress, of course, everything is decided by party;" that "the Capitol is but a scene of intrigue and corruption;" then is public virtue not only shaken, but it is sapped to the very foundation. And if something does not arrest this tendency of public sentiment, it is not too much to fear, that it will whelm the whole fabric in ruins. If virtue in a public man is a thing altogether out of the calculation of his constituents; if he is allowed to look upon his place only as a sphere of personal and party selfishness; if singleminded principle, if single-hearted truth for the country, is thus mocked at by the people, and its possessor is led to regard himself as a prodigy or a fool for his honesty, what is to save the state—all the barriers of virtue broken down—from overwhelming corruption?

Is this general prescription of public men just? I deny that it is.—If it were, then, indeed, I should have nothing to say, but that which I shall directly attempt to say, in discharge of *my* conscience with regard to such high and heaven-daring iniquity. But I deny that the common, the too easy allegation against public men, is true. It may suit the impatience of disappointed partisans, or the envy of inferior men, or the vanity of the all-knowing ones, or the too deep and habitual distrust of the national mind, to bring these sweeping accusations; but I am persuaded that there are men in our high places that ought to stand acquitted of them—men to whom they are a heinous and cruel injustice. I know that all are *not* corrupt; that all are *not* gone out of the way.—Mistaken they may be; prejudiced they may be; it is but human to err; but they are not all to be set down as dishonest men. I know this as well as I can know any fact of such a nature. I know it, because I know the men; or because I know the character they have sustained, and still sustain, among their friends and neighbours. It is obviously a most arbitrary and unwarrantable proceeding to charge upon public men, as such, a worse character than upon the communities they represent; to hold them, in virtue of their elevation, to be bad men: to convert the shield of a goodly reputation, the moment the insignia of office are stamped upon it, into a target for universal abuse and opprobrium.

But, on the other hand, when this treatment is deserved; when a man is false to the high trusts of magistracy and legislation; when he makes of the greater trust only the greater argument for infidelity to the commonweal, there is no language of reprobation too strong to visit upon him. Called by a whole district, perhaps a whole country, to guard and promote its welfare—presiding, alone or jointly, over the affairs and destinies of a whole people; each one's interest involved, each one's interest dear; and the interests of thousands, perhaps of millions, uniting to lay upon him the bond of his great office—if he can shake it from him easily, if he can snap it asunder as tow, and cast it aside as the rubbish of old and outworn morality, I would he might know in what tone the outraged conscience of a nation can speak. I would that the public bosom were taught to heave, and the public eye to flash upon him, with withering and crushing indignation.

It may be thought a light thing, and to little purpose, to say to the man high in office, "You are bound by the laws of morality and honour to act faithfully for the country—yes, and above all men bound." There may be some men of lofty station, and more than one such, who would smile at the simplicity of the appeal, and would imagine that it must come from some child, or from some scholastic and retired person, sadly ignorant of the world. And if, yet more, the nobleness of his function were insisted on; if he were admonished, that nothing on earth can approach so near to the beneficent Divinity as a just and good government, watching over a great people, ministering to the security, comfort, and virtue of millions—he might regard it as a picture drawn by some visionary dreamer. *Is* it so? Is the adjuration of subject millions, appealing to their rulers; is the good or the evil flowing down from them, through all the dwellings of a whole country; is the sighing and the crying that goes up from nations, asking, ever asking for truth and justice in the high places of the world,—is all this to pass for visionary dreaming? Not so! Forbid it, Heaven! Forbid

it, earth! That profane trifling with the sanctitude of power, that accommodating, detestable morality that allows greatness to be a shield for injustice, and office an exemption from duty, let all the world rise to forbid. That humble ignorance should err, that burdened weakness should falter, that crushed poverty should swerve, may find some apology with man, some indulgence with Heaven; but lofty power, but commanding intellect, but proud independence of the low wants of life —these, if anything, shall be held amenable to the moral judgment of mankind; these, if anything, shall stand confronted with the most awful accusations of human guilt, before the just and dread tribunal of God!

I am sensible that the discussion in which I have now engaged, of specific political duties, has already gone to the usual length of a public discourse; but I must venture to beg your indulgence to a few closing remarks, of a more general character. For I am not willing to leave the subject without showing, in the first place, that there is a lawful and useful sphere for those powers and principles which are involved in the political action of a people; or without pointing out, in the second place, the evil of pressing them beyond the bounds of a just morality.

In the first place, then, there is a lawful sphere for political and party action. Parties, as such, are not to be deprecated. Oppositions are not to be deprecated. Newspapers devoted to the maintainance of particular views, newspaper arguments, public speeches — speeches in caucus—are not to be deprecated. They are to be welcomed; they are all good in their place.

What is their place? Let us consider it.

Parties, then, properly regarded, are founded on the different views that are unavoidably taken of public measures and public men. All men cannot think alike. Differences of opinion are inevitable. Parties, then, are necessary; and they are useful. It is for the public advantage, that all questions, touching the commonweal, should be freely discussed. The legitimate action of parties is, the embodied manifestation and advocacy of their respective views of the public policy. This is their proper sphere, and this is their proper limit. It is no part of their business to malign the motives of each other, or to use immoral means for the advancement of their respective ends: and not only so, but it is peculiarly incumbent on these political combinations, if they would act an honourable part, to guard themselves from prejudice, passion, and violence, from slander, intrigue, and oppression. This may be accounted no better, I am sensible, than "the foolishness of preaching." It is the grave voice of political morality, and not of faction. But I cannot admit, that it is out of place here. I cannot believe, that all high principle is to be for ever excluded from politics. I have in my mind still, the *beau ideal* of a party-man, differ as it may from the common example. He is not a man to whom all opinions are indifferent; and, *therefore*, he is a party-man. He is a man who adopts an opinion, and defends it; but then he is a man who stands up manfully and nobly to defend his opinion; courageously and courteously to defend it; honestly and candidly to defend it; and he spurns the idea of misrepresenting either the argument or the character of his adversary. He cares more to be true to his own mind and conscience than to anything else. He guards his liberty from all party invasion, for he will

not be a machine. He takes care not to add to his own natural selfishness the selfishness of ten thousand other persons; for he will not be a blind leader of the blind. He is for his party, indeed, but yet more for his country; and for God above all. "God and my right," is the motto engraven on the arms of a king; but upon his living bosom is stamped the impress of a nobler motto, "God and my country!"

There is also a theory of opposition to the government—the beau ideal of an opposition-man, which, it were to be wished, were more considered than it is. To pull down and destroy is not, in ordinary circumstances, the legitimate end of an opposition; but it is to limit, to control, to correct, and thus ultimately to assist. It is not to look upon the government as a hostile power, that has made a lodgment in the country, and is to be expelled by a party war; but as a lawfully constituted power, that is to be watched, restrained, and kept from going wrong. Still, it is the government of our country, and is to be respected. Still, it is the government of our country, and is to be regarded with a candid, and, I had almost said, a filial spirit. Its officers are not to be assailed with scurrilous abuse, nor its departments to be degraded by vile epithets. There is a certain consideration and dignity to be preserved by an opposition: if not—if its spirit is altogether factious and faultfinding; if it rejoices over the errors of an administration—it so far loses all respectability; it shows that it is not so anxious for a good government, as to be itself the government.

Oppositions, then—parties, party arguments and measures, all have their legitimate sphere. But now, I say, in the second place, that when they transcend their sphere, when they overleap the bounds of morality, they become engines of evil and peril to the country.

The only sound and safe principle, I must continually insist, is that which binds morals and politics in indissoluble union; which admits of no compromise, exception, or question; which will hear of nothing as expedient that is at variance with truth and justice. Politics are to have no scale of morality graduated to their exigencies. That which is wrong everywhere else, is wrong here; that which is wrong for every other body of men, is wrong for a party. A bad man, in every other relation, is a bad man for the country; he may, indeed, chance to espouse some right measure; but he who is devoid of all principle in private life, can give no satisfactory pledge that he will be governed by any principle in public life.

The evils of forsaking the moral guidance in political affairs, are various and vast, and they demand the most serious consideration; they more deeply concern the country than any peril to its visible prosperity; they are such, that they demand our most solemn meditation in our holiest hours and places.

The tendency of political action, when set free from moral restraint, is to break down all personal independence in the country. Parties, then, demand, not honesty, but service, of their votaries. Governments strengthen themselves by bribery and corruption. Oppositions take the same arms, and, in their hour of success, retort the same measures. Abuses become precedents, and precedents multiply abuses. Every new administration, every generation of politicians, becomes not wiser, but worse than their predecessors, their fathers. The tendency of things, without moral restraint, is ever downwards. Already have we

arrived at that stage of deterioration, when you will find many respectable and honest men in the country, blinded by reasonings like these: "Why should not an administration," they say, "reward its friends and supporters? What is it, but righting the wrongs done by a previous administration? What is it, in fact, but choosing its friends, rather than its enemies, to help it to carry on the government?" I will grant, that this must be done, in regard to its immediate council, its cabinet. But when it extends beyond this to subordinate officers, what is it but a system of favouritism and proscription, fatal to all public virtue? Honesty then becomes a discarded and persecuted virtue; and mere blind, unscrupulous party zeal becomes the only passport to honours and emoluments. Honourable citizenship is sunk in base partisanship. The entire national dignity, so far as it is connected with its political action—freedom, franchise, patriotism, self-respect—all is merged in a vile scramble for office. The national conscience is sold in the market; the national honour is all bowed down to the worship of interest; the corrupted nation sets up a golden calf, in place of the Divinity of pristine and holy truth; and not the Israelites at the footstool of God's manifested presence were more debased and sacrilegious idolaters.

The destruction of mutual confidence and respect is another evil connected with our party strifes, and to me it is one of the most painful.

Pass through the different party circles of the country, and what shall you hear? In the course of a single day, you shall hear every public man in the country charged with a total want of principle; you shall hear this constantly from men of the greatest sobriety and weight of character. Not one man in public life, high enough to be a mark for observation, shall escape this tremendous proscription. If you open the newspapers, in the hope, by some patient reading and investigation, to ascertain what the truth is, you find yourself immediately launched upon a sea of doubts. Every fact, every measure, every man, is represented in such different lights, that you are totally at a loss, so far as that testimony goes, what to believe. You are in a worse condition than a juror, vexed by contrary pleadings; you have no judge to help you, and the whole country is filled with party pleadings, without law or precedent, without rule or restraint. You soon come to feel, as if nothing less than the devotion of a whole life can enable you thoroughly to understand the questions that are brought before you; but you have no life to give; you have something else to do. There is, indeed, one way to find relief; and it is the common way. It is to believe everything that one party says, and nothing that another says: but he must altogether abjure his reason, who believes that this is the way to come at the truth. And yet this is the course usually adopted; and men are reading their favourite journals the year round, not to get their minds enlightened, and their judgments corrected, but only to have their passions inflamed and their prejudices confirmed.

Thus, the grand instrument of public opinion is broken. A sound and virtuous public opinion is the only safeguard of the country; and yet men lay their hands upon it as recklessly as if it were given them to practice upon, and to pervert and poison at their pleasure; as if this great surrounding atmosphere of thought, which invests and sustains the people, were but a laboratory for the experiments of ingenuity and tricks of legerdemain.

Thus, I say, confidence is fallen, and with it is fallen mutual respect. What respect can there be between parties, who are constantly accusing one another of fraud and perjury, of the worst practices, and the basest ends? What respect between editors of journals, who are daily charging each other with intrigue, malignity, and wilful falsehood? *Can* any honourable mind desire this state of things? Can nothing be done to introduce a new morality, a new courtesy into our discussions? Must our conflicts always be of this bad and brutal character? Is it not the inevitable tendency of this fierce and blasting recrimination to blunt the sense of honour? Instead of feeling "a stain like a wound," a man is likely to come out of such conflicts seared and scaled all over, as with the mail of leviathan. I confess, that I look with more respect upon the gentle courtesy of the old chivalry, upon the mad sense of honour defended in the tournament, upon the bloody battling of national pride and jealousy, than upon the abusive and outrageous language of our party strifes. All this, too, in a time of peace! All this for difference of opinion, on grave and difficult questions, upon which men may lawfully and honestly differ! Opponents for such cause treating one another like ruffians! Reputation, the life, the more than life of a man, stabbed and slain in the shambles of this political butchery! Tell us not, men of the world! of our *religious* disputes. Talk not of our *odium theologicum*. Say nothing of the contentions of professional men, or of the quarrels of authors. Their sound is scarcely heard now, nor is it likely any more to be audible in this land; for it is all lost in the loud strife and fierce battle of politics that is, every year and every month, rising and raging around us.

And the tendency of all this, in fine, is to debase and brutalize the country. Personal independence beaten down; mutual confidence and respect prostrated; moral deterioration follows as a natural consequence. I do not forget to limit the observation. I know that political action is not the whole action of the country. I do not say, that the national character is all sunk to the point of its political derelictions; by no meaus: but this I say, that immorality in politics, so far as it can take effect, tends to debase and brutalize the country; it tends to corrupt the public sentiment, and to degrade private virtue. No man is so pure, but he is vilified without mercy by the opposite party; no man is so base, so vicious, and criminal, but he is sustained without conscience by his own. It tends to divest the franchise of all dignity, and the government of all venerableness. Let politics be separated from principle, from a high and commanding morality, and, instead of the calm majesty of a free people at the polls, we shall see the brawls of a vulgar election; and, instead of a magnanimous and self-poised government, a miserable, timeserving, place-keeping faction!

But I must check myself. I ought not, for your patience' sake, to enlarge on this topic; though, alas! it were too easy to do so. Is it not possible, I have said, to introduce a new morality, a new courtesy into our political disputes? And little as you may imagine that this question is thought of, yet I am persuaded, that there are thousands of lofty minds that ask it, with eagerness it may be, with sighing, and almost with despair. But I am persuaded that it is possible. Even if the pulpit would do its duty, I persuade myself, that much would be accomplished. If, leaving barren polemics and useless abstractions, it

would address itself to this momentous theme of the nation's moral well-being; if, among the duties which men owe to men, it would, solemnly and emphatically, place the duties they owe to their country, it could not be without some effect. Sad and lamentable, that, in a country like this, the pulpit should be wanting to such a trust! Yes, it *is* possible to do something, to do everything. Possible, did I say? How easy were it! It is but for every writer and speaker to the country to charge himself to speak and write with fairness, candour, and courtesy; for every citizen to vote honestly; for every legislator and ruler to act as one who has sworn at the altar of truth, in the sight of Heaven. Oh! come, holy truth, easier than falsehood! primeval virtue, better than victory! and that which the sages of the world, the prophets of human hope, looking over the ages, have sighed to behold, shall appear—a free and happy community—a free, lofty, and self-governed people!

THE BLESSING OF FREEDOM.

(DELIVERED ON THE THANKSGIVING ANNIVERSARY IN 1837.)

JEREMIAH xxx. 21: "And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governors shall proceed from the midst of them."

THE subject on which I am about to address you, is the blessing of freedom; the advantages of that political condition in which we are placed.

There are various causes in operation which tend to lessen in us the due sense of these advantages. Extravagance of praise; asserting too much with regard to any principle; overdrawn statements of its nature, and perpetual boasting of its effects, are likely in all cases, sooner or later, to bring about a reaction. I think we are now witnessing something of this reaction. The abuses of the principle of liberty also; the outbreakings of popular violence, mobs, and tumults, prostrating the law under foot; and the tyranny moreover of legal majorities; and, withal, the bitter animosities of party strife, and the consequent incessant fluctuations of public policy, constantly deranging the business of the country; all these things are leading some to say, but with more haste and rashness than wisdom, "I must think, that even political oppression and injustice, which should make all strong, and firm, and permanent, would be better than that state of things in which we live." Add to all this, that the blessings which are common, like the air we breathe and the light of day—blessings which are invested with the familiar livery of our earliest and most constant experience—are apt to pass by us unregarded; while the evils of life, calamities and concussions of the elements, shipwrecks, and storms, and earthquakes, rise into portentous and heart-thrilling significance; and we see another and final reason why the advantages of our political condition are liable to be undervalued. We have departed just far enough from those days in which the battle for freedom was fought, to substitute indifference and complaint for the old enthusiasm and devotion.

Indeed, it appears to me, that the time has come, not only in this country, but on the theatre of the world's public opinion, when the merits of popular representative government are to be thoroughly examined. In fact, they were never brought into such controversy all over the world, as they are at this moment. Nay, even in this country, strange as it may seem, there is, in some minds at least, such a controversy. But, in England, the question about giving supreme dominion to the public will, is the great, the ultimate, and vital question of the day. That question, too, is penetrating into France and Germany;

and it will yet make its way into Italy and Russia, and the Ottoman Empire itself.

The first step which I shall take in defending the ground which we as a nation have taken, will be carefully to define it. What, then, is the ground which we have taken? What is the principle of a democratic or representative government? It is, that no restraints, disabilities, or penalties, shall be laid upon any person, and that no immunities, privileges, or charters shall be conferred on any person, or any class of persons, *but such as tend to promote the general welfare.* This exception, be it remembered, is an essential part of our theory. Our principle is *not*, as I conceive, that *no* privileges shall be granted to one person more than to another. If bank charters, for instance, can be proved to be advantageous to the community, our principle must allow them. It is upon the same principle, that we grant acts of incorporation to the governors of colleges, academies, and hospitals, and to many other benevolent and literary societies: it is upon the ground that they benefit the public. And what is government itself, but a corporation possessing and exercising certain exclusive powers for the general weal. The President of the United States is, by our will, the most privileged person in the country: he holds, for the time being, an absolute monopoly of certain extraordinary powers. Will any man say, then, that no person shall enjoy any privileges which he does not enjoy? There may, doubtless, be monopolies and immunities which are wrong, unjust, and injurious. But when the popular cry is, "down with all monopolies! down with all corporations and charters!" I hold, that it is a senseless cry; it is a senseless cry, because it is suicidal, because it is fatal to all government.

Again, I maintain, that our democratic principle is not that the people are always right. It is this rather; that although the people may sometimes be wrong, yet that they are not so likely to be wrong, and to do wrong, as irresponsible, hereditary magistrates and legislators; that it is safer to trust the many with the keeping of their own interests, than it is to trust the few to keep those interests for them. The people are *not* always right; they are often wrong. They must be so, from the very magnitude, difficulty, and complication of the questions that are submitted to them. I am amazed that thinking men, conversant with these questions, should address such gross flattery and monstrous absurdity to the people, as to be constantly telling them, that *they* will put all these questions right at the ballot-box; and I am no less amazed, that a sensible people should suffer such folly to be spoken to them. Is it possible that the people believe it? Is it possible that the majority itself of any people can be so infatuated as to hold that, in virtue of its being a majority, it is always right? Alas! for truth, if it is to depend on votes! *Has* the majority always been right in religion or in philosophy? But the science of politics involves questions no less intricate and difficult. And on these questions, there are grave and solemn decisions to be made by the people; great state problems are submitted to them; such for instance, as concerning internal improvements, the tariff, the currency, banking, and the nicest points of construction, which cost even the wisest men much study: and what the people require for the solution of these questions is, *not* rash haste, boastful confidence, furious anger, and mad strife, but sobriety, calm-

ness, modesty—qualities, indeed, that would go far to abate the violence of our parties, and to hush the brawls of our elections. I do not deny, that questions of deep national concern may justly awaken great zeal and earnestness; but I do deny, that the public mind should be bolstered up with the pride of supposing itself to possess any complete, much less any suddenly acquired, knowledge of them. I am willing to take my fellow-citizens for my governors, with all their errors; I prefer their will, legally signified, to any other government; but to say or imply, that they do not err, and often err, is a doctrine alike preposterous in general theory, and pernicious in its effects upon themselves.

A popular government, then, is not to be represented as an unerring government, but only as less likely to err, less likely to oppress and wrong the people, than any other.

Errors there are, indeed, and enough of them, to make the people unfeignedly cautious and modest, in the great attempt to govern themselves. The violence and immorality of party strifes, the prostration of all social order beneath the feet of infuriated mobs, the taking of life without the forms of law—murder, indeed, in the open day, and with more than the impunity of ordinary concealment—these things fill us at times with alternate disgust and despair. Let the weight of public reprobation rest upon them. I would not lift one finger of the heavy hand which ought to lie upon them, and which ultimately must lie upon them. But let it not be thought, that strifes and tumults are the peculiar results of republican institutions. Will any one say that, during the period of our national existence, we have suffered more from the turbulence of the people than other nations under different forms of government? Have we forgotten the riots, the burning of hay-ricks, and destruction of machinery in England; the horrors of the successive revolutions in France; the tumults and secret societies of Germany; the Ottoman throne swaying to and fro to the pushing pike-staffs of lawless Janizaries; the atrocities of Russian despotism in Poland; the *gentle* tyranny of Austria, not so blood-thirsty—no, but only burying alive her noblest subjects in the graves of Spielburgh and Venice—have we forgotten these things, that we are willing to exchange for such fortunes, the peaceful order of these free and happy States?

It is true, indeed, and lamentable as true, that this peaceful order is sometimes broken. It is true and lamentable, that some of our citizens have strangely forgotten the very principle on which our institutions are based—freedom—freedom of speech, freedom of publication, freedom of trial by jury as the only condition on which life, liberty, or property, in this country shall ever be touched. My blood runs cold in my veins, and I tremble as I look upon my children, to think, that my house or yours may yet be surrounded by an armed mob; that you or I may be shot down, without remorse, on our own threshold, simply for asserting our honest opinion. But I thank God, that this is yet a country, and, I trust in God, always will be a country, in which I can express my indignation alike against the despotism of a government, and the despotism of a populace. When it ceases to be such, be it no longer my country! Give me any tyranny, rather than that most monstrous of all the tyrannies ever heard of—the bloody violence of a lawless people, with liberty on their lips and murder in their hearts. Let this body of mine sink under the Turkish bow-string, or the

Russian knout, rather than be trodden out of life under the heels of a brutal populace. I am not an abolitionist in the technical sense of that word, and I say it now only that I may give my words the greater force —for if I thought every abolitionist in the country worthy of death, I should still say, that the hand which inflicted it without the forms of law, was the hand of a murderer; and wo and shame to the country, if such deeds can go unpunished!

I have said, that I am not an abolitionist; but let it not be supposed, on the other hand, that I am a friend to the system of slavery. With what face could I enter upon a defence of the doctrine of liberty, if I were so! The very despot could defend liberty upon that plan—that is, "liberty for me," he would say, "and bondage for you." Slavery is, undoubtedly, an anomaly in our free institutions. And when I defend and eulogise our freedom, that, of course, must be set aside as a lamentable, though I trust that it is to be a temporary, exception.

Let me now proceed to speak of liberty as a blessing, and the highest blessing that can appertain to the condition of a people. This, you know, is denied. It is maintained, on the contrary, that liberty is a curse. I do not say that such a proposition is openly maintained in *this* country; but in other countries it is maintained—with a zeal to which we must, at least, allow the credit of sincerity—that the liberty we contend for is a curse; that it is not only a dream of enthusiasts, but a wild and dangerous dream, which must, sooner or later, wake to the fearful realities of disorder, anarchy, and bloodshed. We are called upon, therefore, with equal earnestness, to defend the ground which we, as a people, have taken. This defence, I will humbly, in my place, attempt.

And, in the first place, I value our political constitution, because it is the only system that accords with the truth of things, the only system that recognises the great claims, and inalienable rights of humanity. There may be nations who are not prepared to assert these claims and to enjoy these rights. I speak not for them. But for me it is a happiness that I live under a political system that is not based upon error, that involves no gross and palpable violation of the great and manifest rights of humanity. I might feel, in Austria or in Prussia, that I was no sufferer from the political system under which I lived; nay, I might be one of the favourites of that system; but I would not desire to be the favourite of a system which would be a constant reproach to my reason and my conscience. Why, I must naturally desire that even the machinery of a manufactory, were I engaged in one, should be the best—should exhibit the fittest adjustment of part to part; how much more must I desire this, concerning the machinery of that political constitution which involves not only interests, but rights and duties.

There is not, and there cannot be, any true system of political morality, which does not consult the greatest happiness of the greatest number; and no splendour of a nobility, no magnificence of a throne, can atone for the want of that principle. No sentiment of loyalty, however honourable and graceful it may seem, can stand in the place of the dignity of justice!

And what is that justice? The justice of a social system. What is the tenor of the law under which all men evidently hold life, and all the blessings of life, from the great Creator? Is it that one man's will

shall reign, a despotic sovereign, over the welfare of millions? Is it that any one class shall be raised to perpetual honour and power, while all other classes shall be proportionably depressed? Is this justice? I am not saying now what temporary expediency may be; but I say, is this justice? How is it manifestly the will of Heaven, that men, its children, should regard and treat one another? Must we quote written texts to prove that the great Being who reigns over all is no respecter of persons? Must we solemnly appeal to the universal sense of right in the human breast to show, that according to the will of God, the dispensation of wealth, happiness, honour, and all the blessings of existence, should come the nearest possible to the measure of distributive justice—the nearest possible to being the reward of merit? That it cannot come precisely to this point, is true: but is that any argument for failing to come the nearest possible to it? Can any honourable and generous mind willingly consent to live—can it live happily, with monstrous social injustice all around it—with monstrous social injustice as the very basis of its distinction; and that injustice capable of a remedy? And is there not injustice in the social, the semi-feudal system of Europe—a system of immemorial preferences in church and state, in political employments, and social honours! What is it but to run a race, in which certain hereditary competitors have all the advantage? Would you send your sons so to run a race even in a May-day game? But what is this to the race of life, the race for happiness, which all men are running? Would you put out your children to an apprenticeship, or into a school, where certain of their fellows, by no merit of their own, were placed so far above them, that they could only by gracious permission, raise their eyes to them? But what would this be to the great discipline and school of life? These are not mere figures; they represent facts; they point to grievous burthens, heavy to be borne. Is it not a burthen to the Dissenter, that all the ecclesiastical revenues of a kingdom should be garnered up for a privileged church? Is it not a burthen to the commoner, that so many of the powers and honours of a state should be lavished upon a hereditary class? Is it not a burthen to the labourer or artisan, that so large a portion of the capital of a country should be for ever sequestered from their reach, for the case and aggrandizement of a few? The capital of a country consists mainly in its soil, its mines, its woods, and waters. And now, to take the most prosperous example of feudal institutions in the world—who, I ask, who own almost half of the soil and mines, the woods and waters of England? Her nobles; and by law they are permitted to hold them, in perpetual entail, in their own families, for their own advantage, and even free from attachment for debt? And in addition to this, by the custom and courtesy, should I not rather say the discourtesy of society, they are permitted to look down upon the whole surrounding world.

I thank Heaven that I live in a country of more equal institutions. I do not pretend here to judge of English Reforms. Whether they are too rapid or too slow, I am not qualified to decide; but I may, at least, thank Heaven that we do not need them. Perhaps I have a hearer, to whom even these candid allusions to England may not be agreeable. It may not be without some degree of irritation that he will ask, why I should say anything in disparagement of England, the most glorious

country, he may say, in the world. He may say this, and I shall not refuse to agree with him: but the glory of England is the work of time and position, and of a noble race of men, and not, I trust, of the inequality of her political constitution. Why, then, do I speak as I do, even of the fairest and most modified example of feudal institutions? I will answer. It is because I stand up for justice, as the dearest immunity of a civilized state; it is because I stand up for humanity, as the noblest claim in the world; it is because I contend for a dignity higher than that of kings and nobles—the dignity of truth; it is, in fine, because I am willing, and I wish to stand on earth as a man—beneath the equal and even canopy of heaven—in presence of the impartial justice and lovingkindness that reign in that heaven—there to discharge my lot, and to work out my welfare as a man. It offends me, to think that I, or any other man, should be bolstered up with hereditary advantages, or with social or religious immunities, that are denied to mine equals, my brethren, in the sight of God. That is my feeling, be it called Quixotism, or whatever else any one may call it. I have, in this matter, an unfortunate and strange way of thinking of others as if they possessed my own nature; and I cannot patiently bear, that the children of one common Father should be treated with a partiality that would revolt me, if it were introduced among the children of an earthly parentage. It is monstrous in the eye of reason: it is treason to gentle humanity; it is as truly unjust as if it were the oppression of bonds and burthens; and the time will come when it will be so regarded. The dignity of the English mind, I am certain, will not always bear it. In the mean time, I say it again, I thank Heaven that I am made no party, either better or worse, to the injustice of such a system.

II. In the next place I value our liberty, and deem it a just cause of thankfulness to Heaven, because it fosters and developes all the intellectual and moral powers of the country.

Freedom is the natural school of energy and enterprise. Freedom is the appropriate sphere of talent and virtue. The soul was not made to walk in fetters. To act powerfully, it must act freely; and it must act, too, under all the fair incentives of an honest and honourable ambition. This applies especially to the mass of the people. There may be minds, and there are, which find a sufficient incentive to exertion in the love of knowledge and improvement, in the single aim at perfection; but this is not, and cannot be, the condition of the mass of minds; they need other impulses. Open then, I say, freely and widely to every individual, the way to wealth, to honour, to social respect, and to public office, and you put life into any people. Impart that principle to a nation of Turks, or even of Hindoos, and it will be as a resurrection from the dead. The sluggish spirit will be aroused; the languid nerve will be strung to new energy; there will be a stir of action and a spring to industry all over the country, because there will be a motive. Alas! how many poor toilers in the world are obliged to labour without reward, without hope, almost without motive! Like the machinery amidst which they labour, and of which they are scarcely more than a part, they are moved by the impulse of blind necessity. The single hope of bettering their condition, which now, alas! never visits them, would regenerate them to a new life.

Now it is with such life that this whole nation is inspired. It is

freedom that has breathed the breath of life into this people. I know that there are perils attending this intense action and competition of society; but I see, nevertheless, a principle that is carrying forward this country with a progress altogether unprecedented in the history of the world. Invention, internal improvement, and accumulation among us, are taking strides before unheard of. More school-houses, colleges, and churches, have been builded in this country within the last twenty years; more canals and railroads have been constructed; more fortunes have been acquired, and, what is better, more poor men have risen to competence; and, in fine, more enterprises and works of social and religious beneficence have been achieved than ever were done, take them all together, in an equal time by an equal population under heaven. For these things I love and honour my country; for these things I am thankful to Heaven that my lot is cast in it; and this I say, not in the spirit of boasting, but because I think the time has come when it needs to be said; because I believe that many of us are insensible to our advantages; because the eyes of the world are fixed upon us for inquisition and for reproach, and incessant foreign criticism is liable to cool the fervour of our patriotism.

Nay, I will go further, and confess the secret hope I have long entertained, that the liberty wherewith, as I believe, God has made us free, that the equal justice, the impartial rewards which encourage individual enterprise in this country, will produce yet more glorious and signal results; results that will proclaim to all the world, that political equity is the best pledge for national dignity, strength, and honour; results which will, effectually and forever, break down the pernicious maxim, that a certain measure of political injustice and favouritism is necessary to the order and security of the social state. As I believe in a righteous Providence, I do not believe in this maxim; and I trust in God, that it will receive its final and annihilating blow in this very country. It is not that I challenge for our people any natural superiority to other people: it is not to the shrine of national pride that I bring the homage of this lofty hope, but to the footstool of divine goodness. It is to our signal advantages, and especially to the equal justice of our institutions, that I look for the accomplishment of this great hope. I believe that *freedom*—free action—free enterprise—free competition—will be found to be the best of auspices for every kind of human success. I believe that our citizens will be found to act more effectively, and more generously, and more nobly, for being free; that our citizen soldiers will, if called upon, fight more valiantly for being free; that our labourers will toil more cheerfully for being free; that our merchants will trade more successfully; nay, and little as it may be expected, that our preachers and orators will discourse more eloquently, and that our authors will write more powerfully, for the spirit of freedom that is among us. The future, indeed, must tell us whether this is a dream of enthusiastic patriotism. But I would fain have the most generous of principles for once laid at the heart of a great people, and see what it will do. Alas! for humanity—never yet has it been treated with the confidence of simple justice. Never yet has any voice effectually said to man, "God has made thee to be as happy and as glorious, if thou wilt, as thy most envied fellow." When that voice does address the heart of the multitude, will it not arouse itself to loftier efforts, to nobler

sacrifices, to higher aspirations, and more generous virtues, than were ever seen to be the offspring of any unequal and ungenerous system that ever man has devised? God grant that the hope may be realized, and the vision accomplished! It were enough to make one say, "Now let me depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!"

III. In the third place, I value political liberty, because, of that which a free and unfettered energy obtains, it gives the freest and amplest use.

What is the effect, nay, what is the design of a despotic government, but to deprive the people of the largest amount that it can, or dare, of the proceeds of their honest industry and laudable enterprise? Under its grossest forms, it levies direct contributions; in its more plausible administration, it levies taxes; but in either case, its end is the same—to feed and batten a few, at the expense of the many. In order the more effectually to accomplish this purpose, such governments require standing armies, or, to speak more exactly, a military force to act at home; that is to say, a part of the citizens, one of each family perhaps, must be armed and trained, in order to coerce and control the labour, the toil, the entire labour of the rest.

Such, then, more or less strongly marked, is the condition of labour in every part of the world, with the exception of our own favoured country. The people must work till they are weary, for the supply of their *own* wants. So far the law of labour is healthful, and every way useful; but after that, they must work a while longer, one or two hours every day, to support a home military force. And then, when the yoke is fairly fixed upon their necks, they must work as much longer as their masters please, to gorge the almost insatiable appetite of a luxurious court, and a herd of idle courtiers and sycophants beside; and the reward they get, is twofold; perpetual poverty, and an utter contempt of their grovelling employments.

Let me not be told, that differences in the form of government are mere matters of speculation; that they have very little to do with our private welfare; that a man may be as happy under one form as another. I think it was on occasion of our revolution, that Dr. Johnson put forth some such oracle as this; but it is not true; it may pass for good-nature, or for smooth philosophy, if any one pleases so to call it; but it is not true. What more obvious interest of human life is there, than that a man's labour shall produce for him the greatest possible amount of comfort; that he should enjoy, as far as is compatible with the support of civil order, the proceeds of his toil! Labour, honourable and useful as it is, is not so very agreeable, that a man should recklessly give it for that which is not bread. And *that* he emphatically does who gives it for pensions, sinecures, and monopolies, and establishments, and wars, which benefit him not at all. What real interest have the people had in four-fifths of the wars that have devastated Europe, and burthened all her governments with enormous debts? It is strange, indeed, when the labouring hand is so near the suffering heart, that men do not feel this; but the reason is, that the exactions of selfish and unjust governments come upon them in the indirect form of taxation; of impost, and revenue, and excise, and the hundred minor and contemptible contrivances that have been invented to hide from them the fact. Let them be told, let them see, that of their ten hours' toil each

day, four or five only are for themselves or their families, while the remainder are for other families and other children than their own, and they would think it intolerable; but this, more or less, always is, and always must be, the condition of the people, where governments do not represent its expressed and supreme will; for it is not in human nature lawfully and justly to use unlawful and unlimited power. I only wish to know that governments have the power to oppress the people, to know that they use it. And the very definition of such a power is—*a power not emanating from themselves.* Tell your neighbour, ay, or your friend, that he may govern you, not as much as you please, but just as much as he pleases, and you know very well what the consequences will be. You would not trust your dearest friend, nor scarcely an angel in heaven, to have such a power over you. I thank Heaven that there is no such power, and nothing approaching to it, in this country. And, in order to make out a clear case of superior advantages on our part, it is not necessary that I should go into details (for which, indeed, I have not space); it is not necessary that I should now particularize and say, that this government possesses such a power, and that government a certain other power, which bear hard upon the people; for every government not emanating from them, is sure to present a case of such hardship. But one fact I will mention in this connexion, which may stand in place of all other facts, and that is, the eternal enmity which exists in every other country between the government and the people. That enmity, as old as the creation, has never been brought so completely to an end as here. I know that we hear sometimes of measures of an administration, as having an unfriendly bearing upon particular interests; but it is certain, that the government with us can never stand up in permanent hostility to that people of which it is the creature. But when we turn our eyes abroad, what do we see? Everywhere the people are demanding constitutions, charters, immunities, changes, which their respective governments will not concede to them. So far as the satisfaction of a people with its institutions is concerned, we are, after all that is said about popular disturbances among us, in a state of singular, of enviable, I may say, of profound tranquillity. And well do I know, if I know the spirit of this people, that that tranquillity would be effectually disturbed, were a tithe of the resistance and refusal to which every other nation must submit, to lay its intolerable grievance on us. The very cup of blessings with us would be a cup of wrath and indignation.

I have offered some reasons to show that our freedom is a blessing. It is founded in rectitude as a principle; it fosters the intellectual and moral growth of a country; and it favours the amplest enjoyment of all the blessings of existence. These are reasons. But I should not exhaust the subject, even in this most general view of it, if I did not add one further consideration in behalf of freedom; a consideration that is higher and stronger than any reason—I mean, the *intrinsic desirableness* of this condition to every human being. In this respect, freedom is like virtue, like happiness; we value it for its own sake. God has stamped upon our very humanity this impress of freedom; it is the unchartered prerogative of human nature. A soul ceases to be a soul, in proportion as it ceases to be free. Strip it of this, and you strip it of one of its essential and characteristic attributes. It is this that draws

the footsteps of the wild Indian to his wide and boundless desert-paths, and makes him prefer them to the gay saloons and soft carpets of sumptuous palaces; it is this that makes it so difficult to bring him within the pale of artificial civilization. Our roving tribes are perishing—a sad and solemn sacrifice upon the altar of their wild freedom. They come among us, and look with childish wonder upon the perfection of our arts, and the splendour of our habitations; they submit with ennui and weariness, for a few days, to our burthensome forms and restraints; and then turn their faces to their forest homes, and resolve to push those homes onward till they sink in the Pacific waves, rather than not be free.

It is thus that every people is attached to its country, just in proportion as it is free. No matter if that country be in the rocky fastnesses of Switzerland, amidst the snows of Tartary, or on the most barren and lonely island-shore; no matter if that country be so poor, as to force away its children to other and richer lands for employment and sustenance; yet when the songs of those free homes chance to fall upon the exile's ear, no soft and ravishing airs, that wait upon the tuned feastings of Asiatic opulence, ever thrilled the heart with such mingled rapture and agony as those simple tones. Sad mementos might they be of poverty, and want, and toil; yet it was enough that they were mementos of happy freedom; and more than once has it been necessary to forbid, by military orders, in the armies of the Swiss mercenaries, the singing of their native songs.

And such an attachment, do I believe, is found in our own people to their native country. It is the country of the free; and that single consideration compensates for the want of many advantages which other countries possess over us. And glad am I that it opens wide its hospitable gates to many a noble but persecuted citizen, from the dungeons of Austria and Italy, and the imprisoning castles and citadels of Poland. Here may they find rest, as they surely find sympathy, though it is saddened with many bitter remembrances!

Yes, let me be free; let me go and come at my own will; let me do business and make journeys, without a vexatious police or insolent soldiery to watch my steps; let me think, and do, and speak what I please—subject to no limit but that which is set by the common weal; subject to no law but that which conscience binds upon me—and I will bless my country, and love its most rugged rocks and its most barren soil.

I have seen my countrymen, and have been with them a fellow-wanderer, in other lands; and little did I see or feel to warrant the apprehension, sometimes expressed, that foreign travel would weaken our patriotic attachments. One sigh for home—home arose from all hearts. And why, from palaces and courts—why, from galleries of the arts, where the marble softens into life, and painting sheds an almost living presence of beauty around it—why, from the mountain's awful brow, and the lovely valleys and lakes touched with the sunset hues of old romance—why, from those venerable and touching ruins to which our very heart grows—why, from all these scenes, were they looking beyond the swellings of the Atlantic wave, to a dearer and holier spot on earth, their own, own country? Doubtless it was, in part, because it *is* their country; but it was also, as every one's experience will tes-

tify, because they knew that *there* was no oppression, no pitiful exaction of petty tyranny; because that *there*, they knew, was no accredited and irresistible religious domination; because that *there*, they knew, they should not meet the odious soldier at every corner, nor swarms of imploring beggars, the victims of misrule; that *there*, no curse causeless did fall, and no blight, worse than plague and pestilence, did descend amidst the pure dews of heaven; because, in fine, that *there*, they knew, was liberty—upon all the green hills, and amidst all the peaceful valleys—liberty, the wall of fire around the humblest home; the crown of glory, studded with her ever-blazing stars, upon the proudest mansion!

My friends, upon our own homes that blessing rests, that guardian care and glorious crown; and when we return to those homes, and so long as we dwell in them, so long as no oppressor's foot invades their thresholds, let us bless them, and hallow them as the homes of freedom? Let us make them, too, the homes of a nobler freedom—of freedom from vice, from evil, from passion, from every corrupting bondage of the soul.

DISCOURSES

ON

HUMAN LIFE.

TO

THE CONGREGATION,

WORSHIPPING IN THE

CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH, IN NEW YORK.

My Brethren and Friends,

In anticipation of leaving my pulpit for an absence of two years in Europe, I have collected these out of the mass of Discourses which I have delivered to you, and I beg leave to present them to you as an expression of that interest in the true and vital prosperity of Religion among you, which neither time, nor distance, nor parting oceans nor foreign climes, nor anything else, I trust, can weaken. You will observe, that although it is a volume of Discourses on Human Life, it is scarcely a series. The Discourses were written without any original intention of making a series, and mostly without any reference to each other; and I may therefore need the public indulgence for the occasional recurrence of the same topics—of the same ideas—possibly of the same expressions. Such as the Volume is, I commit it to you, in grateful remembrance of those hours in the sanctuary, where they have been the subject of our common meditations.

Bidding you an affectionate farewell for a season, I am your friend and servant,

ORVILLE DEWEY.

ON THE MORAL SIGNIFICANCE OF LIFE.

Job iv. 12—16: "Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof. In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face, and the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof; an image was before mine eyes; there was silence, and I heard a voice."

Human life, to many, is like the vision of Eliphaz. Dim and shadowy veils hang round its awful revelations. Teachings there are to man, in solemn and silent hours, in thoughts from the visions of the night, in vague impressions and unshaped reveries; but, on this very account, they fail to be interpreted and understood. There is much teaching; but there is also much unbelief.

There is a scepticism, indeed, about the entire moral significance of life, which I propose, in this discourse, to examine. It is a scepticism —sometimes taking the form of philosophy, sometimes of misanthropy and scorn, and sometimes of heavy and hard-bound worldliness—which denies that life has any lofty, spiritual import; which resolves all into a series of toils, and trifles, and vanities, or of gross and palpable pursuits and acquisitions. It is a scepticism, not about creeds, not about Christianity—it lies farther back—lies far deeper; it is a scepticism about the very meaning and intent of our whole existence.

This scepticism I propose to meet; and for this purpose I propose to see what argument can be extracted out of the very grounds on which it founds itself.

The pertinency of my text to my purpose, as I have already intimated, lies in this: there is much of deep import in this life, like that which Eliphaz saw in the visions of the night—not clear, not palpable, or at least not usually recognised and made familiar; but it cometh, as it were in the night, when deep sleep falleth on men; it cometh in the still and solitary hours; it cometh in the time of meditation or of sorrow, or of some awful and overshadowing crisis of life. It is secretly brought to the soul, and the ear receiveth a little thereof. It is as a spirit that passeth before us, and vanisheth into the night-shadow; or it standeth still, but we cannot discern the form thereof; there is an undefined image of truth; there is silence; and at length there is a voice.

It is of these unrecognised revelations of our present being that I would endeavour to give the interpretation; I would attempt to give them a voice.

But let us spread out a little, in the first place, the sceptic's argument. It says, "What is there in human existence that accords with your lofty Christian theory? You may talk about the grandeur of a human life, the sublime wants and aspirations of the human soul, the solemn consciousness, amidst all life's cares and toils, of an immortal destiny;—it is all a beautiful dream! Look over the world's history, and say, what intimations doth it furnish of that majestic design—the world's salvation? Look at any company of toiling and plodding men in the country around you; and what are they thinking of, but acres and crops, of labour and the instruments of labour? Go into the noisy and crowded manufactory, and what is there but *machinery*—animate or inanimate—the mind as truly girded and harnessed to the work, as the turning-lathe or the banded wheel? Gaze upon the thronged streets, or upon holiday crowds, mixing the oaths of the profane with the draughts of the intemperate: and where is the spiritual soul that you talk of? Or look at human life in a large view of it, and of what is it made up? Trouble and weariness"—you see that it is the cynic's complaint—"trouble and weariness; the disappointment of inexperience or the dulness of familiarity; the frivolity of the gay or the unprofitable sadness of the melancholy; the heavy ennui of the idle or the plodding care of the busy; the suffering of disease or the wasted energy of health; frailty, its lot, and its doom, death; a world of things wasted, worn out, perishing in the use, tending to nothing, and accomplishing nothing; so complete the frivolity of life with many, that they actually think more of the fine apparel they shall wear, than of the inward spirit, which you say is to inherit the immortal ages!"

All this, alas! is too true; but it is not true to the extent, nor in the exclusive sense, alleged. That but few meditate on their lot as they ought, is perfectly true; but there are impressions and convictions that come into the mind through other channels than those of meditation. They come perhaps, like the shadowy vision of Eliphaz, in darkness and silence; vague, indistinct, mysterious, awful; or they come in the form of certain, but neglected and forgotten truths. And they come, too, from those very scenes, in which the eye of the objector can see nothing but material grossness or thoughtless levity. This is what I shall especially attempt to show. I shall not undertake, in this discourse, to go farther; but I believe that I shall not perform a useless service to the true faith of our being, if I may be able, in some measure, to unveil and bring to light those secret intimations which are often smothered indeed, but which from time to time are flashing out from the cloud of human cares and pursuits.

"Man," it is said, "is bound up in materialism, imprisoned by the senses, limited to the gross and palpable; far-reaching thoughts, soaring aspirations, are found in essays and speculations about him rather than in his own experience; they are in books rather than in brick-yards and ploughed fields and tumultuous marts."

What stupendous revelations are cloaked and almost hidden by familiarity! This very category of scepticism—what is it, but the blind admission of the sublimest truth? A *man* is recognised as standing amidst this palpable cloud of care and labour—enclosed, it is said, shut up in sense and matter—but still a *man!* A dungeon is this world, if you please so to represent it; but in this dungeon is a prisoner moaning,

sorrowing, sighing to be free. A wilderness world it is, in the thought of many; but *one* is struggling through this wilderness who imparts to it a loftier grandeur than its own; his articulate voice, his breathed prayer, or his shout amidst the dim solitudes—nay, the very sound of his axe in the forest depths—is sublimer than all the solemn symphonies of autumn winds sweeping through its majestic aisles.

Grant that matter and sense are man's teachers; and consider these teachings in their very humblest form, in their very lowest grade—what they teach *perforce*, and in spite of man's will. What are they? Materialism itself suggests to man the thought of an immaterial principle. The senses awaken within him the consciousness of a soul. Of a soul, I say; and what is that? Oh! the very word, soul, is itself soiled by a common use, till we know not what it means. So that this universal endowment of humanity—this dread endowment, by which infinity, eternity, nay, and divinity, belong to its innate and inmost conceptions, can be at once admitted and almost overlooked, in the account of human existence.

In man, the humblest instruments reveal the loftiest energies. This is not enthusiasm, but philosophy. The modern French philosophy has the merit of having distinctly unfolded this principle, that all our mental perceptions suggest their opposites—the finite, the infinite; the seen, the unseen; time, eternity; creation, a God. The child that has tried his eye upon surrounding objects, soon learns to send his thoughts through the boundless air and to embrace the idea of infinite space. The being that is conscious of having lived a certain time, comes to entertain, as correlative to that consciousness, the conception of eternity. These are among the fundamental facts of all human experience. Such, to a man, in distinction from an animal, is the instrumentality of his very senses. As with a small telescope, a few feet in length and breadth, man learns to survey heavens beyond heavens, almost infinite, so with the aid of limited senses and faculties does he rise to the conception of what is beyond all visible heavens, beyond all conceivable time, beyond all imagined power, beauty, and glory. Such is a human life. Man stands before us, visibly confined within the narrowest compass; and yet from this humble frame, stream out on every side the rays of thought, to infinity, to eternity, to omnipotence, to boundless grandeur and goodness. Let him who will, account this existence to be nothing but vanity and dust. I must be allowed, on better grounds, to look upon it as that in whose presence all the visible majesty of worlds, and suns, and systems sink to nothing. Systems, and suns, and worlds, are all comprehended in a single thought of this being whom we do not yet know.

But let us pass from these primary convictions which are suggested by matter and sense, to those spheres of human life where many can see nothing but weary labour, or trifling pleasure, or heavy ennui.

Labour, then—what is it, and what doth it mean? Its fervid brow, its toiling hand, its weary step—what do they mean? It was in the power of God to provide for us as he has provided for the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven, so that human hands should neither toil nor spin. He who appointed the high hills as a refuge for the wild goats, and the rocks for the conies, might as easily have caused marble cities and hamlets of enduring granite to have been productions

of nature's grand masonry. In secret forges, and by eternal fires, might every instrument of convenience and elegance have been fashioned; the winds might have woven soft fabrics upon every tree, and a table of abundance might have been spread in every wilderness and by every seashore. For the animal races it is spread. Why is it not for man? Why is it especially ordained as the lot of man, that in the sweat of his brow he shall eat his bread? Oh! sirs, it hath a meaning. The curse, so much dreaded in the primeval innocence and freedom of nature, falls not causeless on the earth. Labour is a more beneficent ministration than man's ignorance comprehends, or his complainings will admit. It is not mere blind drudgery even when its end is hidden from him. It is all a training, it is all a discipline—a development of energies, a nurse of virtues, a school of improvement. From the poor boy who gathers a few sticks for his mother's hearth, to the strong man who fells the forest oak, every human toiler, with every weary step, and every urgent task, is obeying a wisdom far above his own wisdom, and is fulfilling a design far beyond his own design—his own supply, accumulation, or another's wealth, luxury, or splendour.

But now let us turn to an opposite scene of life. I mean pleasure and dissipation. Is this all mere frivolity—a scene that suggests no meaning beyond its superficial aspects? Nay, my friends, what significance is there in unsatisfying pleasure? What a serious thing is the reckless gaiety of a bad man! What a picture, almost to move our awe, does vice present to us! The desperate attempt to escape from the ennui of an unfurnished and unsatisfied mind; the blind and headlong impulse of the soul to quench its maddening thirst for happiness in the burning draughts of pleasure; the deep consciousness which soon arises of guilt and infamy; the sad adieu to honour and good fame; the shedding of silent and bitter tears; the flush of the heart's agony over the pale and haggard brow; the last determined and dread sacrifice of the soul and of heaven to one demoniac passion—what serious things are these! What signatures upon the soul to show its higher nature! What a fearful handwriting upon the walls that surround the deeds of darkness, duplicity, and sensual crime! The holy altar of religion hath no seriousness about it deeper, or, I had almost said, more awful, than that which settles down upon the gaming-table, or broods oftentimes over the haunts of corrupting indulgence. At that altar, indeed, is teaching; words, words are uttered here; instruction, cold instruction, alas! it may be, is delivered in consecrated walls; but if the haunts of evil could be unveiled, if the covering could be taken off from guilty hearts, if every sharp pang and every lingering regret of the vitiated mind could send forth its moanings and sighs into the great hearing of the world, the world would stand aghast at that dread teaching.

But besides the weariness of toil and the frivolity of pleasure, there is another state of life that is thought to teach nothing, and that is ennui; a state of leisure, attended with moody reveries. The hurry of pursuit is over for the time; the illusions of pleasure have vanished; and the man sits down in the solitariness of meditation; and "weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable," appear to him all the uses of this life. It seems to him, as I once heard it touchingly expressed, even by a child, "as if everything was nothing." This has been the occasional mood of many lofty minds, and has often been expressed in our literature.

"Life's little stage is a small eminence,
Inch high above the grave; that home of man,
Where dwells the multitude; we gaze around;
We read their monuments; we sigh; and while
We sigh, we sink: and are what we deplored;
Lamenting, or lamented, all our lot!"

"To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays, have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. * * * * *
Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."

But bound up with this poor, frail life, is the mighty thought that spurns the narrow span of all visible existence. Out of this nothing, springs a something—a significant intimation, a dread revelation of the awful powers that lie wrapped up in human existence. Nothing more reveals the majestic import of life than this ennui, this heart-sinking sense of the vanity of all present acquisitions and attainments. "Man's misery," it has been well said, "comes of his greatness." The sphere of life appears small, the ordinary circle of its avocations narrow and confined, the common routine of its cares insipid and unsatisfactory—why? Because he who walks therein demands a boundless range of objects. Why does the body seem to imprison the soul? Because the soul asks for freedom; because it looks forth from the narrow and grated windows of sense upon the wide and immeasurable creation; because it knows that around and beyond it, lie outstretched the infinite and the everlasting paths.

I have now considered some of those views of life which are brought forward as objections against our Christian theory of its greatness. My purpose in this discourse is not to penetrate into the wisdom of its deeper relations, but to confine myself to its humblest aspects, and to things that are known and acknowledged to be matters of fact.

With this view, I proceed to observe, in the last place, that *everything* in this life bears traits that may well stir our minds to admiration and wonder.

How mysterious is the connexion of mind with matter; of the act of my will with the motion of my hand; this wonderful telegraphic communication between the brain and every part of the body! We talk of nerves; but how knoweth the nerve in my finger of the will that moves it? We talk of the will; but what is it, and how does its commanding act originate? It is all mystery. Within this folding veil of flesh, within these dark channels, every instant's action is a history of miracles. Every familiar step is more than a story in a land of enchantment. Were the marble statue before us suddenly endowed with that self-moving power, it would not be intrinsically more wonderful than is the action of every being around us.

The human face is itself a wonder. I do not mean in its beauty, nor in its power of expression, but in its variety and its individuality. What is the problem that is here solved? Suppose it were stated thus: given,

a space nine inches long and six inches broad, the form essentially the same, the features the same, the colours the same; required, unnumbered hundreds of millions of countenances so entirely different, as, with some rare exceptions, to be completely and easily distinguishable. Would not the whole mechanical ingenuity of the world be thrown into utter despair of approaching any way towards such a result? And yet it is completely achieved in the human countenance. Yes, the familiar faces that are around us bear mysteries and marvels in every look.

Again, the house thou dwellest in—that familiar abode—what holds it together, and secures it on its firm foundation? Joint to joint, beam to beam, every post to its socket, is swathed and fastened by the mighty bands that hold ten thousand worlds in their orbits. This is no phantasm of the imagination; it is the philosophical fact. All actual motion, and all seeming rest, are determined by unnumbered, most nicely balanced, and at the same time, immeasurable influences and attractions. Universal harmony springs from infinite complication. And therefore, every step thou takest in thy dwelling—still I only repeat what philosophers have proved—the momentum of every step, I say, contributes its part to the order of the universe.

What then is a life, conscious of these stupendous relations, and what are its humblest dwellings? If you lived in a palace that covered an hundred miles of territory, and if the stamping of your foot could convey an order to its farthest limits, you would feel that that, indeed, was power and grandeur. But you live in a system of things, you dwell in a palace, whose dome is spread out in the boundless skies, whose lights are hung in the wide arches of heaven, whose foundations are longer far than the earth, and broader far than the sea, and you are connected by ties of thought, and even of matter, with its whole boundless extent. If your earthly dwelling, your house of life, were lifted up and borne visibly among the stars, guarded with power and clothed with light, you would feel that that was a sublime fortune for any being to enjoy. To ride in a royal chariot would be a small thing compared with that. But you are borne onward among the celestial spheres; rolling worlds are around you; bright starry abodes fill all the coasts and skies of heaven; you *are* borne and kept by powers—silent and unperceived indeed—but real and boundless as the immeasurable universe.

The infinite, we allow, is mysterious; but not less so, in truth, is the finite and the small. It is said that man cannot comprehend infinity. It is true, and yet it is falsely said in one respect. The declaration that we cannot understand infinity, usually conveys the implication that we can comprehend that which is the opposite of infinity, that is, the little scene around us. But the humblest object beneath our eye as completely defies our scrutiny, as the economy of the most distant world. Every spire of grass, of which the scythe mows down millions in an hour, holds within it secrets, which no human penetration ever fathomed. Examine it with the microscope, and you shall find a beautiful organization; channels for the vital juices to flow in; some to nourish the stalk; others to provide for the flower and prepare the seed; other instruments still, to secrete the nutriment that flows up from the soil, and to deposit and incorporate it with the plant; and altogether, a mechanism more curious than any, perhaps, ever formed by the

ingenuity of man. And yet there are questions here, which the profoundest philosopher cannot answer. What is the principle of life,—without which, though the whole organization remains, the plant dies? And what is that wonderful power of secretion? No man can tell. There are inscrutable *mysteries*, wrapped up in the foldings of that humble spire of grass.

Sit down now, and take thy pen, and spread out thine account, as some writers have done, of the insignificance of human life. But wilt thou pause a little and tell me first, how that pen was formed wherewith thou art writing, and that table whereon thy tablets are laid? Thou canst tell neither. *Wilt* thou not pause then, when the very instruments thou art using, should startle thee into astonishment? Lay thine hand where thou wilt, and thou layest it on the hiding bosom of mystery. Step where thou wilt, and thou dost tread upon a land of wonder. No fabled land of enchantment ever was filled with such startling tokens. So fraught are all things with this moral significance that nothing can refuse its behest. The furrows of the field, the clods of the valley, the dull beaten path, the insensible rock, are trod over and in every direction, with this handwriting, more significant and sublime than all the beetling ruins and all the buried cities, that past generations have left upon the earth. It is the handwriting of the Almighty!

In fine, the history of the humblest human life is a tale of marvels. There is no dull or unmeaning thing in existence, did we but understand it; there is not one of our employments, no, nor one of our states of mind, but is, could we interpret it, as significant—not as instructive, but as significant as holy writ. Experience, sensation, feeling, suffering, rejoicing—what a world of meaning and of wonder lies in the modes, and changes, and strugglings, and soarings of the life in which these are bound up. If it were but new, if we had been cast upon "this shore of being," without those intervening steps of childhood, that have now made it familiar ground, how had we been wrapt in astonishment at everything around, and everything within us!

I have endeavoured, in the present discourse—perhaps in vain—to touch this sense of wonder: to arouse attention to the startling and awful intimations, to the striking and monitory lessons and warnings of our present existence. And if some of the topics and suggestions of my discourse have been vague and shadowy, yet I am ready to say—better to be startled by the shadows of truth, than to sleep beneath its noontide ray: better to be aroused by the visions of a dream, than to slumber on in profound unconsciousness of all the signs and wonders of our being. Oh! that I could tear off this dreadful common-place of life, and show you what it is. There would be no want then of entertainment or excitement, no need of journeys or shows or tales to interest us; the everyday world would be more than theatres or spectacles; and life all-piercing, all-spiritual, would be more than the most vivid dream of romance—how much more than the most eager pursuit of pleasure or profit.

My brethren, there is a vision like that of Eliphaz stealing upon us, if we would mark it, through the veils of every evening's shadows, or coming in the morning with the mysterious revival of thought and consciousness; there is a message whispering in the stirred leaves, or

starting beneath the clods of the field, in the life that is everywhere bursting from its bosom. Everything around us images a spiritual life —all forms, modes, processes, changes, though we discern them not. Our great business with life is so to read the book of its teaching,—to find that life is not the doing of drudgeries, but the hearing of oracles! The old mythology is but a leaf in that book, for it peopled the world with spiritual natures. Many-leaved science still spreads before us the same tale of wonder. Spiritual meditation, interpreting experience, and above all, the life of Jesus, will lead us still farther into the heart and soul and the innermost life of all things. It is but a child's life to pause and rest upon outward things, though we call them wealth and splendour. It is to feed ourselves with husks, instead of sustaining food. It is to grasp the semblance, and to lose the secret and soul of existence. It is as if a pupil should gaze all day upon the covers of his book and open it not, and learn nothing. It is indeed that awful alternative which is put by Jesus himself—to gain the world—though it be the whole world—and to lose our own soul.

THAT EVERYTHING IN LIFE IS MORAL.

Job vii. 17, 18: "What is man that thou shouldst magnify him, and set thine heart upon him; and that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment."

That we are tried every moment—is the clause of the text, to which I wish, in this discourse, to direct your meditation. By which, in the sense of the passage before us, is not meant that we are continually afflicted, but that we are constantly proved and put to the test; that everything which befalls us, in the course of life and of every day, bears upon us, in the character of a spiritual discipline, a trial of our temper and disposition: that everything developes in us, feelings that are either right or wrong. I have spoken in my last discourse of the moral significance of life. I propose to speak in this, of the possible moral use, and of the inevitable moral effect of everything in life. My theme, in short, is this—that everything in life is moral, or spiritual.

There is no conviction which is at once more rare, and more needful for our improvement, than this. If the language of Job's discontent and despair, in the chapter from which our text is taken, is not familiar to many, yet to very many, life appears at least mechanical and dull. It is not such, in fact, but it appears such. It appears to be mere labour, mere business, mere activity; or it is mere pain or pleasure, mere gain or loss, mere success or disappointment. These things, if not mechanical, have, at least to many minds, nothing spiritual in them. And not a few pass through the most important transactions, through the most momentous eras of their lives, and never think of them in their highest and most interesting character. The pervading morality, the grand spiritual import of this earthly scene, seldom strikes their minds, or touches their hearts; and if they think of ever becoming religious, they expect to be so only through retirement from this scene, or, at least, through teachings, and influences, and processes, far removed from the course of their daily lives.

But now I say, in contradiction to this, that *everything in life* is spiritual. What is man, says Job, that thou visitest him every morning? This question presents us, at the opening of every day, with that view of life which I propose to illustrate. That conscious existence, which, in the morning, you recover from the embraces of sleep—what a testimony is it to the power and beneficence of God! What a teacher is it of all devout and reverent thoughts! You laid yourself down and slept. You lay, unconscious, helpless, dead to all the purposes of life, and unable, by any power of your own, ever to awake. From that

sleep, from that unconsciousness, from that image of death God has called you to a new life—he has restored to you the gift of existence. And now what meets you on this threshold of renewed life? Not bright sunbeams alone, but God's mercies visit you in every beaming ray and every beaming thought, and call for gratitude; and you can neither acknowledge nor resist the call without a moral result. That result may come upon you sooner then you expect. If you rise from your bed, with a mind undevout, ungrateful, self-indulgent, selfish, something in your very preparations for the day, something that may happen in a matter slight as that of the toilet, may disturb your serenity and cloud your day at the beginning. You may have thought, that it was only the prayer of the morning that had any religion, anything spiritual in it. But I say, that there is not an article in your wardrobe, there is not an instrument of daily convenience to you, however minute, or otherwise indifferent, but it has a power so far moral, that a little disarray or disorder in it may produce in you a temper of mind, ay, a *moral* state, of the most serious character. You may not be conscious of this; that is, you may not be distinctly sensible of it, and yet it may be none the less true. We are told that the earth, and every substance around us, is full of the electric fluid; but we do not constantly perceive it: a little friction, however, developes it, and it sends out a hasty spark. And so in the moral world—a slight chafing, a single turn of some wheel in the social machinery—and there comes, like the electric spark, a flashing glance of the eye, a hasty word, perhaps a muttered oath, that sounds ominous and awful as the tone of distant thunder! What is it that the little machinery of the electric operator developes? It is the same power, that, gathering its tremendous forces, rolls through the firmament, and rends the mountains in its might. And just as true is it, that the little round of our daily cares and occupations, the humble mechanism of daily life, bears witness to that moral power, which, only extended, exalted, enthroned above, is the dread and awful majesty of the heavens.

But let us return to our proposition. *Everything is moral*, and therefore, as we have said, great and majestic; but let us, for a few moments, confine ourselves to the simple consideration, that everything in its bearings and influences is moral.

All times and seasons are moral: the serene and bright morning, we have said, that wakening of all nature to life; that silence of the early dawn, as it were the silence of expectation; that freshening glow, that new inspiration of life, as if it came from the breath of heaven; but the holy eventide also—its cooling breeze, its falling shade, its hushed and sober hour: the sultry noontide, too, and the solemn midnight; and spring-time and chastening autumn; and summer that unbars our gates, and carries us forth amidst the ever-renewed wonders of the world, and winter, that gathers us around the evening hearth,—all these, as they pass, touch, by turns, the springs of the spiritual life in us, and are conducting that life to good or evil. The very passing of time, without any reference now to its seasons, developes in us much that is moral. For what is the passing of time, swifter or slower, what are its lingering and its hasting, but indications, but expressions often, of the state of our own minds; it hastes often, because we are wisely and well employed; it lingers, it hangs heavily upon us, because our

minds are unfurnished, unenlightened, unoccupied with good thoughts, with the fruitful themes of virtue; or because we have lost almost all virtue, in unreasonable and outrageous impatience. Yes, the idle watch-hand often points to something within us; the very dial-shadow falls upon the conscience!

The course of time on earth is marked by changes of heat and cold, storm and sunshine; all this, too, is moral. The weather, dull theme of comment as it is often found, is to be regarded with no indifference as a moral cause. For, does it not produce unreasonable anxieties, or absolutely sinful complainings? Have none who hear me ever had reason to be shocked to find themselves *angry* with the elements; vexed with chafing heat, or piercing cold, or the buffeting storm; and ready, when encountering nature's resistance, almost to return buffet for buffet?

But let us turn from the course of inanimate nature, to matters in which our own agency is more distinct and visible.

Go with me to any farm-house in the land, and let us see what is passing there, and what is the lofty and spiritual import of its humble history. It is the theatre of strenuous toils and besetting cares. Within doors is work to be done; that work which is proverbially "never *done*;" and without, the soil is to be tilled, the weeds and brambles are to be rooted up, fences are to be builded, of wood or stone, and to be kept in repair; and all this is to be done with tools and instruments that are not perfect, but must be continually mended; the axe and the scythe grow dull with use; the plough and the harrow are sometimes broken; the animals which man brings in to assist his labours, have no instincts to make them do the very thing he wishes, they must be trained to the yoke and the collar, with much pains and some danger.

Now the evil in all this is, not the task that is to be performed, but the grand mistake that is made about the spiritual purpose and character of that task. Most men look upon such a state of life as mere labour, if not vexation; and many regard it as a state of inferiority, and almost of degradation. They *must work* in order to obtain sustenance, and that is all they know about this great dispensation of labour. But why did not the Almighty cast man's lot beneath the quiet shades and amid embosoming groves and hills, with no such task to perform; with nothing to do, but to rise up and eat, and to lie down and rest? Why did he ordain, that *work* should be done, in all the dwellings of life, and upon every productive field, and in every busy city, and on every ocean wave? Because—to go back to the original reason—it pleased God to give man a nature destined to higher ends than indolent repose and irresponsible indulgence. And because, in the next place, for developing the energies of such a nature, work was the proper element. I am but repeating, perhaps, what I have said before to you; but I feel, that in taking this position, I am standing upon one of the great moral landmarks which ought to guide the course of all mankind; but on which, seen through a mist, or not seen at all, the moral fortunes of millions are fatally wrecked. Could the toiling world but see that the scene of their daily life is all spiritual, that the very implements of their toil, or the fabrics they weave, or the merchandise they barter, were all designed for spiritual ends, what a sphere of the noblest

improvement might their daily lot then be! What a revolution might this single truth produce in the condition and character of the whole world! But now, for a man to gird himself for spiritual improvement —what is it? Why, with most men, it is to cast off the soiled and dusty garments of toil—the slough of mere worldly drudgery, as they are called—and to put on the Sunday suit and go to church, or to sit down and read a book. Good employments are these, but one special design of them is, to prepare the mind for the action of life. We are to hear and read, we are to meditate, and pray, partly, at least, for this end—that we may act well. The action of life is the great field for spiritual improvement. There is not one task of industry or business, whether in field or forest, on the wharf or the exchange, but it has spiritual ends. There is not one of the cares or crosses of our daily labour, but it was especially ordained, to nurture in us patience, calmness, gentleness, disinterestedness, magnanimity. Nor is there one tool, or implement of toil, but it is a part of the great spiritual instrumentality.

Everything in life, then, I repeat, is essentially spiritual. Every relation in life is so. The relations of parent, child, brother, sister, friend, associate, husband, wife, are throughout every living tie and thrilling nerve that binds them together, *moral*. They cannot subsist a day nor an hour, without putting the mind to a trial of its truth, fidelity, forbearance, disinterestedness.

But let us take the case of the parent—of the young mother, for instance. She may have passed her youth in much thoughtlessness; in a round of fashionable engagements, that have left her little time to think, even when approaching the most solemn relationships of life; and she may have become a wife and mother, before she has settled, or even meditated, any reasonable plan or principle of life and of duty. Now, I am not about to say that the new charge committed to her hands brings with it many obvious duties and strong obligations; but I desire you to observe how, what is moral in the case, is thrust upon her; as if a hand were suddenly stretched forth into her path, with movement and gesture that bade her pause and consider. For, *what* is in that path? It is a being, though but a little child, in whom is suddenly revealed that awful attribute, the indomitable will. That will, perhaps, utters itself in a scream of passion; it stamps upon the ground in a fury of anger; it vents itself in tears; or flashes in lightning from the eye.—Yes, the being that a few days before was an unconscious and helpless infant in her arms, has all at once put on the terrific attribute of will; and its astonished guardian stands aghast, as if an uncaged lion had broken upon her path. *What*, then, is in that path? I answer, it is what nothing but moral firmness can fairly meet, and nothing but the gentleness and patience of piety and prayer can ever successfully and wisely manage, control, and subdue! And I say again, that if moral action, if religious consideration, was never before awakened, that very epoch, that very hour, might reasonably be the commencement, with her, of a complete and spiritual regeneration! For nothing less than actual regeneration from a thoughtless, self-indulgent life, ever did, or can, prepare any one thoroughly and faithfully to discharge the duties of a parent.

Again; everything in the condition of life is moral; wealth, the means of lavish expense, or the argument for avaricious hoarding; po-

verty, the taskmaster, that exacts labour, or inflicts self-denial, mediocrity of means, the necessity, the vexatious necessity, as some will consider it, of attending to the little items of expense, or the mortifying inferiority to others, in the splendour of equipages and establishments; trade, the splendid success, the fortunate speculation, the disappointed hope, the satisfactory endorsement, the dishonoured note, the sharp bargain—all moral; the professions and callings of life, some making their incumbents unreasonably proud, others making their equally useful agents unreasonably humble. When we look upon things in this light, how moral is everything around us! This great city is one extended scene of moral action. There is not a blow struck in it, but has a purpose, and a purpose ultimately good or bad, and therefore moral. There is not an action performed but it has a motive; and motives are the very sphere of morality. These equipages in our streets, these houses and their furniture—what symbols are they of what is moral, and how are they, in a thousand ways, ministering to right or wrong feeling! You may have thought that you were to receive the teachings of morality and religion only by resorting to church: but take your seat in your well-furnished, perhaps splendid apartment, and there is not an object around you but may minister to the good or bad state of your mind. It is a little empire, of which your mind is the creator. From many a trade and occupation and art in life, you have gathered contributions to its comfort or splendour. The forest, the field, the ore-bed, the ocean—all elements, fire, water, earth, air, have yielded their supplies to form this dwelling-place, this palace of your thoughts. Furniture, whose materials came from beyond the sea; polished marbles wrought from the quarries of Italy; carpets from the looms of England; the luxurious couch, and the shaded evening lamp—of what are all these the symbols? What emotions do they awaken in you? Be they emotions of pride, or be they emotions of gratitude; be they thoughts of self-indulgence only, or thoughts, merciful thoughts, of the thousands who are destitute of all the comforts of life—what a moral complexion do they bear!

Nay, and this spiritual dispensation of life may press down upon a man in a way he little thinks of. For how possible is it, that amidst boundless wealth, in its most gorgeous mansion, and surrounded by everything that can minister to pleasure, a family may be more miserable than the poorest family in the land!—the children spoiled by indulgence, made vain and proud by their over-estimated advantages, made peevish, impatient, and imbecile, by perpetual dependence on others, and not half so happy, even, as thousands of children who are half clad and unshod, and who never knew what it was to give a command; their elders injured or ruined in constitution by luxuries; enfeebled and dulled in mind by the hard tasks that are imposed on the functions of the body, and yet absurdly puffed up with pride, that they can live splendidly and fare sumptuously every day—how possible is it, I repeat, that coarse fare and a pallet of straw, may turn out to be better than the bed of down, and the loaded table, and the cellar of choice wines! Ay, the loaded table, what a long moral account, accumulating day by day, through years, may have been written upon that table; and payment, perchance, must be made on the couch of agony!

Again, society is throughout a moral scene. I cannot enlarge upon

this point, as it would be easy to do, but must content myself with one or two observations. Conversation, for instance, is full of inward trials and exigencies. It is impossible that imperfect minds should commune together without a constant trial of their tempers and virtues. Though of the most friendly and kindred spirit, they will have different opinions or varying moods; one will be quicker or slower of apprehension than the other on some point; one will think the other wrong, and the other will feel as if it were unkindly or uncharitably construed; and there will be dispute, and pertinacity, and implication, and retort, and defence, and complaint; and well, if there are not sarcasm and anger! And well, if these harsh sounds do not invade the sanctuary of home! Well, if they do not bring disturbance to the social board, and discord amidst the voices of music and song!

Is not everything, then, in social life, moral?—really a matter of religion—a trial of conscience? You enter your dwelling. The first thing that you see—and it may be a very slight thing—may call upon you for an act of self-command. The thing may not be as it should be; but that is not the most material consideration; that is not what most concerns you. The material consideration is, that your mind may be put out of its proper place, that you may not be as you should be. You go from your door. The sight of the first man you behold may call for a trial of all your virtues. You enter into the throng of society. Every turn of your eye may present an occasion for the exercise of your self-respect, your calmness, your modesty, your candour, your forgetfulness of self, your love of others. You visit the sick or necessitous. Every step may be one of ostentation, or at least of self-applause; or it may be one of true generosity and goodness. You stand amidst the throng of men; and your position has many relations; you are higher or lower than others, or you are an equal and a competitor; and none of these relations can be wisely sustained without the aid of strong religious considerations. Or, your position is fixed and unalterable. You are a parent; and you give a command or make a request. A thoughtful observer will perceive the very tone of it to be moral; and a friend may know that it has cost twenty years of self-discipline to form that gentle tone! Or you are a child; and you obey or disobey; and let me tell you that the act, nay the very manner of your act, is so vitally good or bad, that it may send a thrill of gladness, or a pang, sharp as a sword, to the heart of your parent. Or you are a pupil; and can any act or look be indifferent, which by its levity, or negligence, or ill-humour, adds to the already trying task of those who spend anxious days and nights for you?

But I must leave these specifications, which I find indeed cannot well be carried into the requisite detail in the pulpit; but I must leave them also for the sake of presenting in close, one or two general reflections on the whole subject.

I observe, then, that the consideration of everything in our life, as moral, as spiritual, would impart an unequalled interest and dignity to life.

First, an unequalled interest.

It is often said that the poet, or the man of genius, is alive to a world around him, to aspects of nature and life, which others do not perceive. This is not strictly true; for when he describes his impressions, he finds

a responsive feeling in the breasts of his readers. The truth is—and herein lies much of his power and greatness—that he is vividly and distinctly conscious of those things which other men feel indeed, but feel so vaguely, that they are scarcely aware, till told, of them. So it is in spiritual things. A world of spiritual objects, and influences, and relations, lies around us all. We all vaguely deem it to be so; but what a charmed life—how like to that of genius or poetic inspiration—is his who communes with the spiritual scene around him; who hears the voice of the spirit in every sound; who sees its signs in every passing form of things, and feels its impulse in all action, passion, being!

"The kingdom of heaven," says our Saviour, "is like a treasure hid in a field." There is a treasure in the field of life, richer than all its visible wealth; which whoso finds, shall be happier than if he had discovered a mine of gold. It is related that the mine of Potosi was unveiled, simply by tearing a bush from the mountain side. Thus near to us lie the mines of wisdom; thus unsuspected they lie all around us. "The word," saith Moses, speaking of this very wisdom, "is very nigh thee." There is a secret in the simplest things, a wonder in the plainest, a charm in the dullest. The veil that hides all this, requires but a hand stretched out, to draw it aside.

We are all naturally seekers of wonders; we travel far to see sights, to look upon the mountain height or the rush of waters, to gaze upon galleries of art or the majesty of old ruins; and yet a greater than all these is here. The world wonder is all around us; the wonder of setting suns and evening stars—the wonder of the magic spring-time—of tufted bank and blossoming tree; the wonder of the Infinite Divinity, and of his boundless revelation. As I stood yesterday and looked upon a tree, I observed little jets as of smoke, darting from one and another of its bursting buds. Oh! that the secrets of nature might thus burst forth before us; that the secret wisdom of the world might thus be revealed to us! Is there any splendour to be found in distant travels beyond that which sits its morning throne in the golden East; any dome sublimer than that of heaven; any beauty fairer than that of the verdant and blossoming earth; any place, though invested with all the sanctities of old time, like that home which is hushed and folded within the embrace of the humblest wall and roof? And yet all these—this is the point at which I aim—all these are but the symbols of things far greater and higher. All this is but the spirit's clothing. In this vesture of time is wrapped the immortal nature; in this brave show of circumstance and form stands revealed the stupendous reality. Break forth, earth-bound spirit! and *be*, that thou art—a living soul—communing with thyself—communing with God—and thou shalt find thy vision, eternity—thine abode, infinity—thy home in the bosom of all-embracing love!

> "So build we up the being that we are;
> Thus deeply drinking in the soul of things,
> We shall be wise perforce.
> Whate'er we see,
> Whate'er we feel, by agency direct
> Or indirect, shall tend to feed and nurse
> Our faculties, shall fix in calmer seats
> Of moral strength, and raise to loftier heights
> Of love divine, our intellectual soul."

And thus, in the next place, shall we find that all the real dignity and importance that belong to human life, belong to every human life, *i. e.* to life in every condition. It is the right mind, the right apprehension of things only, that is wanting, to make the peasant's cottage as interesting, as intrinsically glorious, as the prince's palace. I wish that this view of life might be taken by us, not only because it is the right view, but because it would tend effectually to promote human happiness, and especially contentment. Most men look upon their employments and abodes as common-place and almost as mean. The familiar objects around them appear to them almost as vulgar. They feel as if there could be no dignity nor charm in acting and living as they are compelled to do. The plastered wall, and the plain deal boards, the humble table, spread with earthen or wooden dishes—how poor does it all seem to them! Oh! could they live in palaces of marble, clothed with silken tapestries, and filled with gorgeous furniture and canopies of state—it were something. But now, to the spiritual vision, what is it all? The great problem of humanity is wrought out in the humblest abodes; no more than this, is done in the highest. A human heart throbs beneath the beggar's gabardine; it is no more than this that stirs with its beating the prince's mantle. What is it, I say, that makes life to be life indeed—makes all its grandeur and power? The beauty of love, the charm of friendship, the sacredness of sorrow, the heroism of patience, the soul-exalting prayer, the noble self-sacrifice —these are the priceless treasures and glories of humanity; and are these *things of condition?* On the contrary, are not all places, all scenes, alike clothed with the grandeur and charm of virtues like these? And compared with these, what are the gildings, the gauds and shows of wealth and splendour? Nay, compared with every man's abode—his sky-dome and earth-dwelling—what can any man's abode be? Thou livest in a world of beauty and grandeur. Who liveth in a fairer, a more magnificent world, than thou? It is a dwelling which God hath made for thee; does that consideration deprive it of all its goodliness? And suppose thou wast rich, and wast surrounded with all the gaiety and grandeur of wealth. How might they hide from thee, alas! all the spiritual meanings of thy condition! How might the stately wall and the rich ceiling hide heaven from thy sight! Let thine eye be opened to the vision of life, and what state then, what mere visible grandeur, can be compared to them? It is all but a child's bauble, to the divine uses of things, the glorious associations, the beatific visions that are opened to thee! God hath thus "magnified," and, to use the strong and figurative language of our text, "set his heart" upon the humblest fortunes of humanity.

There are those who, with a kind of noble but mistaken aspiration, are asking for a life which shall in its form and outward course be more spiritual and divine than that which they are obliged to live. They think that if they could devote themselves entirely to what are called labours of philanthropy, to visiting the poor and sick, that would be well and worthy—and so it would be. They think that if it could be inscribed on their tombstone, that they had visited a million of couches of disease, and carried balm and soothing to them, *that* would be a glorious record—and so it would be. But let me tell you, that the million occasions will come,—ay, and in the ordinary paths of life, in

your homes and by your firesides—wherein you may act as nobly, as if all your life long you visited beds of sickness and pain. Yes, I say, the million occasions will come, varying every hour, in which you may restrain your passions, subdue your hearts to gentleness and patience, resign your own interest for another's advantage, speak words of kindness and wisdom, raise the fallen and cheer the fainting and sick in spirit, and soften and assuage the weariness and bitterness of the mortal lot. These cannot indeed be written on your tombs, for they are not one series of specific actions, like those of what is technically denominated philanthropy. But in them, I say, you may discharge offices not less gracious to others, nor less glorious for yourselves, than the self-denials of the far-famed sisters of charity, than the labours of Howard or Oberlin, or than the sufferings of the martyred host of God's elect. They shall not be written on your tombs; but they are written deep in the hearts of men—of friends, of children, of kindred all around you: they are written in the secret book of the great account!

How divine a life would this be! For want of this spiritual insight, the earth is desolate, and the heavens are but a sparkling vault or celestial mechanism. Nothing but this spirit of God in us can "create that new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." For want of this, life is to many dull and barren, or trifling, uninteresting, unsatisfactory—without sentiment, without poetry and philosophy alike, without interpretation or meaning or lofty motive. Whirled about by incessant change, making an oracle of circumstance and an end of vanity, such persons know not why they live. For want of this spiritual insight, man degrades himself to the worship of condition, and loses the sense of what he is. He passes by a grand house, or a blazoned equipage, and bows his whole lofty being before them—forgetting that he himself is greater than a house—greater than an equipage—greater than the world. Oh! to think that this walking majesty of earth should so forget itself, that this spiritual power in man should be frittered away, and dissipated upon trifles and vanities—how lamentable is it! There is no Gospel for such a being; for the Gospel lays its foundations in the spiritual nature. There is nothing for man but what lies in his spirit—in spiritual insight—in spiritual interpretation. Without this, not only is heaven nothing, but the world is nothing. The great Apostle has resolved it all in few words. "There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit—but to all others there is condemnation,—sorrow, pain, vanity, death. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

LIFE CONSIDERED AS AN ARGUMENT FOR FAITH AND VIRTUE.

MATTHEW iv. 4: "But he answered and said, It is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

THE necessity to man, of something above all the resources of physical life, is the subject to which, in this discourse, I shall invite your attention.

In two previous discourses on human life which I have addressed to you, I have endeavoured to show, in the first place, and in general, that this life possesses a deep, moral significance, notwithstanding all that is said of it, as a series of toils, trifles, and vanities, and in the next place, and in pursuance of the same thought, that everything in life is positively moral—not merely that it is morally significant, but that it has a positive moral efficiency for good or for evil. And now I say in the third place, that the argument for the moral purpose, is clenched by the necessity of that purpose, to the well-being of life itself. "Man," —says our Saviour, with solemn authority—"shall not live by bread alone, but"—by what! how few seem to believe in it!—"by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

How few seem to believe in it—how few do believe this, in the highest sense—and yet how true is it! Into how large a part even of the most ordinary life, enters a certain kind and degree of spirituality! You cannot do business, without some faith in man—that is, in the spiritual part of man. You cannot dig in the earth, without a reliance on the unseen result. You cannot step, or think, or reason, without confiding in the inward, the spiritual principles of your nature. All the affections, and bonds, and hopes, and interests of life, centre in the spiritual. Break that central bond, and you know that the world would rush to chaos.

But something higher than this indirect recognition is demanded in our argument. Let us proceed to take it up in form.

There are two principles, then, involved in the moral aim, and embracing its whole scope, whose necessity I propose now to consider. They are faith and virtue: the convictions, that is to say, on which virtue reposes, and the virtue itself. Something above a man's physical life must there be to help it—something above it in its faith—something beyond it in its attainment.

In speaking of faith as necessary to human life, I need not here undertake to define its nature! This will sufficiently appear as we

proceed. What I wish to speak of, is, in general, a faith in religion—in God, in spiritual truth and hopes. What I maintain, in general, is the indispensableness to human life of this religious faith. My present purpose is, to offer some distinct and independent considerations in support of this faith: and these considerations I find based, imbedded, deep-founded in human life.

To illustrate the general character of the view which I wish to present, let us make a comparison. Let it be admitted, then, and believed, on the one hand, that there is a God; let the teachings of Jesus, also, be received—that this God is our Father; that he has a paternal interest in our welfare and improvement: that he has provided the way and the means of our salvation from sin and ruin; that he hears our prayers, and will help our endeavours; that he has destined us, if faithful, to a future, and blessed, and endless life; and then, how evident is it, that upon this system of faith, we can live calmly, endure patiently, labour resolutely, deny ourselves cheerfully, hope steadfastly, and "be conquerors," in the great struggle of life, "yea, and more than conquerors, through Christ who has loved us!" But take away any one of these principles; and where are we? Say that there is no God, or that there is no way opened for hope, and prayer, and pardon, and triumph, or that there is no heaven to come, no rest for the weary, no blessed land for the sojourner and the pilgrim; and where are we? and what are we? What are we, indeed, but the sport of chance, and the victims of despair? What are we, but hapless wanderers upon the face of the desolate and forsaken earth—surrounded by darkness, struggling with obstacles, distracted with doubts, misled by false lights—not merely wanderers who have lost their way, but wanderers, alas! who have no way, no prospects, no home? What are we, but doomed, deserted voyagers, upon the dark and stormy sea, thrown amidst the baffling waves, without a compass, without a course, with no blessed haven in the distance to invite us to its welcome rest?

What now is the conclusion from this comparison? It is, that religious faith is indispensable to the attainment of the great ends of life. But that which is necessary to life, must have been designed to be a part of it. When you study the structure of an animal, when you examine its parts, you say, "This was designed for food; there must be food for this being, somewhere; neither growth, nor life is possible without it." And when you examine the structure of a human mind, and understand its powers and wants, you say with equal confidence, "This being was made for faith; there must be something, somewhere, for him to believe in; he cannot healthfully grow, he cannot happily live without it."

The argument which I now urge for faith, let me distinctly say, is not that which is suggested by worldly prudence—that religion is a good thing for the State, useful to society, necessary for the security of property; and therefore to be received and supported. The concession that the great interests of the world cannot be sustained without religion, and therefore that religion is necessary, is considered by many, I fear, as yielding not to reasoning fairly, but to policy. This was the view of religion, doubtless, which pervaded the ancient systems of polytheism. It was a powerful state engine; a useful social economy; and hence, with multitudes, it was little more than a splendid ritual. It

was not a personal thing. It was not received as true, but only as expedient. Now, that which I maintain is this—not that religion is necessary, and therefore respectable; not that religion is necessary, and therefore to be supported, in order that the people may be restrained and managed, and held in check; but my argument is, that religion is necessary, and therefore true. The indispensableness of religion, I hold, is not merely a reason for its being supported, but a reason for its being believed in.

The point maintained, let me now more distinctly observe, is this; that in every kind of existence, in every system of things, there are certain primary elements or powers, which are essential to its just order and true well-being, and that under a wise Providence, these elements must be regarded as bearing the stamp of divine appointment and authority. Find that which is necessary to any being or thing, and you find that which was designed to be a part of that being or thing. Find that which in the long run, injures, hurts, or hinders; find that which is fatal to the growth, progress, or perfection of any being or thing, and you find that which does not properly belong to it. He who would cultivate a tree, knows that a soil, and a certain internal structure, are necessary to that end. And if he should, with that end in view, set himself to deprive it of those essential elements of growth, his act would be one of perfect fatuity.

Let us dwell upon this point, and the illustration of it, a little longer.

In the human body, we say, food is necessary. Stint it, and the body languishes; cut off the supply, and it ceases to exist. So in the human body, the circulation of the blood is necessary. Interrupt it, and the body is diseased; stop it, and the body dies. How truly has our Saviour denominated his doctrine, the very food and life-blood of the soul. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you; whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life;" meaning, according to a figurative and well-known use of language at that time, his spirit and doctrine. And how manifestly true is it! Cut off from any soul all the principles that Jesus taught—the faith in a God, in immortality, in virtue, in essential rectitude; and how inevitably will it sink into sin, misery, darkness, and ruin! Nay, cut off all sense of these truths, and the man sinks at once to the grade of the animal.

Again, in the system of the universe, there is one principle that is essential to its order—the principle of gravitation. Sever this bond that holds all worlds and systems together, and they would instantly fly into wild and boundless chaos. But society, in its great relations, is as much the creation of heaven, as the system of the universe. Sever, then, all the moral bonds that hold it together; cut off from it every conviction of truth and integrity—of an authority above it, and of a conscience within it; and society would immediately rush to disorder, anarchy, and ruin. If, then, to hold society together, and to bind it in happy order, religion be as necessary as gravitation is to hold together the frame of nature, it follows, that religion is as really a principle of things as gravitation; it is as certain and true.

Once more; animal life has its law—instinct. And when we look

at the races of animals, and see how indispensable this law is to their welfare; when we see, that without this principle, they would inevitably fall into misery and destruction, we have no doubt that instinct is a heaven-ordained law. Equally necessary to *man*, is some law. What is it? He has appetites, propensities, passions, like the animal; but he has no instincts to control them, and keep them safe. What law, then, must he have? Will it be said, that prudence, the love of himself, the love of happiness, is sufficient to guide him? That will depend upon his idea of happiness. If it is purely sensual, then he is left to the impulses of sense; and that, too, without the guardianship of instinct, and with all the additional peril, in which the infinite cravings of his soul put him, and against which, indeed, no barrier of instinct or prudence could ever defend him. But if his idea of happiness includes a spiritual good, that implies a faith in the spiritual; and this is the very faith for which I contend. And I contend, too, that this faith—faith in moral principles, faith in virtue and in God—is as necessary for the guidance of a man, as instinct is for the guidance of an animal. This, I believe, will not be denied. I believe that every man must be conscious, that to be given up to his sensual impulses, without any faith in virtue or in God, would be as certain ruin to him, as it would be to an animal to be sent into the world without the control of instinct. And if it be so, then has the one principle a place as truly appointed, a mission as truly authentic in God's providence, as the other.

But further; man and animal too, need more than safety. They need some positive good—something that satisfies. The animal has it, in the pleasures of sensation. But will these suffice for a man? It would be an insult to any one, feeling as a man, formally to answer the question. But if higher pleasures are demanded, these must be the pleasures of the soul. And these pleasures must depend on certain principles: they must recognise a soul; that is, they must recognise the properties and responsibilities of a soul: they must recognise a conscience and the sense of an authority above us; and these are the principles of faith.

Moreover, the soul on earth is placed in fearful straits of affliction and temptation. This too, it would be but an insult to human feeling, formally to prove. And in this view, I maintain, and I only maintain what every reflecting man must feel to be true, that no tolerable scheme of life—no tolerable scheme of a rational, tried, suffering, and yet improving and happy existence—can be formed, which leaves out the religious principle, the principle of faith. I do not ask you to receive this as what is said in the pulpit, or is wont to be laid down in religious discourse; but I desire you to see that it stands and stands eternally, in the very truth of things. A man *cannot* suffer and be patient; he *cannot* struggle and conquer; he *cannot* improve and be happy, without conscience, without hope, without God in the world. Necessity is laid upon us to embrace the great truths of religion and to live by them, to live happily; and can the language of this necessity be mistaken? Can it be, that while there is one thing, above all others, necessary to support, strengthen, guide, and comfort us, that one thing—upon which, moreover, the hearts of the wise and good have ever rested—should be, of all things in the world, the thing most false, treacherous, and delusive?

It would be strange indeed, if it were so; and strange would be the assertion even to the point of incredibility. What!—we should say—has everything in the universe certain laws and principles for its action—the star in its orbit, the animal in its activity, the human body in its functions—and has the human soul nothing to guide it? Nay, man as a physical being has strong and sure supports. Has he none as a spiritual being? He knows how to feed and nourish his body; there are laws for that. Must his soul die, for want of aliment—for want of guidance? For his physical action too, he has laws of art. The builder, the sower, the toiler at the oar and the anvil, has certain principles to go by. Has the MAN none at all? Nay more, the wants of *animal* sense are regarded. In every hedge, and water-pool, and mountain-top, there is supply. For the rational soul is there no provision? From the lofty pine, rocked in the darkening tempest, the cry of the young raven is heard. And for the cry and the call of all that want and sorrow and agony, that overshadow and rive the human heart, is there no answer?

But I cannot argue the point any farther; and I need not; it is too plain. The total rejection of all moral and religious belief, strikes out a principle from human nature, as essential to it as gravitation is to inanimate nature, as instinct is to animal life, or as the circulation of the blood, to the human body.

It is on this principle that it is said, "He that believeth not, shall be damned." This is apt to be regarded as a harsh declaration; but the truth is, it is only the assertion of a simple fact; and of a fact which every thoughtful and feeling mind knows to be true. The Bible speaks, as we should speak to the famished man, saying, "Eat—drink; or die!" Its words—"death," and "damnation," mean nothing else but that unavoidable misery which must spring from boundless wants unsatisfied—boundless wants which nothing but boundless objects, the objects of faith, can satisfy.

I have now considered life as an argument, and an independent argument, for faith. It would be easy to spread this view of life over the whole ground of that preliminary discussion, which introduces the evidences of Christianity; and to show that the presumption of reason and experience, and the whole weight of that presumption, instead of being, as is commonly supposed, against the believer, is, in fact, in his favour. But the space which I designed to give to this topic, is already taken up by the few hints which I have laid before you; and I must now pass to the other branch of my discourse, and occupy the time that remains to me, with the consideration of life as an argument for accomplishing its moral design—in other words, as a motive to virtue. This too, as well as the former, I propose to consider as an independent topic.

Thus then, I state it. Let what will, be true, or be false: admit ever so little into your creed, reject ever so much; nay, go to the uttermost limits of scepticism: deny revelation; deny the "elder Scripture" written in the heart; deny the very being of a God!—what then? I will now express no horror nor wonder, though I might do so: I will speak to you as a calm reasoner: and I say, what then? Why, here you are, a living being—there can be no scepticism about that; here you are a living being—alive to happiness, alive to misery; here

you are, in vicissitude, in uncertainty, in all the accidents of a mingled lot, in conditions and relations that touch all the secret springs of the soul; here you are, amidst a frail life, and daily approaching to certain death; and if you say you have no concern nor care for the end of all this, then have you forfeited all claim to the attributes of a reasonable nature, and are not to be addressed as a reasonable creature.

But no one says this. No one refuses to come within the range of those considerations that bind him to fulfil his destiny, to accomplish the legitimate objects of his being, to be upright, virtuous, and pure. No one rejects this bond in theory, however he may resist it in practice.

Let us see, then, how strong this bond is. Let us look at life, as a social and as an individual lot.

God has ordained that life should be a social condition. We are members of a civil community. The life, the more than life of that community, depends upon its moral condition. Public spirit, intelligence, uprightness, temperance, kindness, domestic purity, will make it a happy community. Prevailing selfishness, dishonesty, intemperance, libertinism, crime, will make it a miserable community. Look, then, at this life which a whole people is living. Look at the heavings of its mighty heart, at the throbbings of the universal pulse of existence. Look at the stream of life, as it flows, with ten thousand intermingled branches and channels, through all the homes of human love. Listen to that sound as of many waters, that rapturous jubilee, or that mournful sighing, that comes up from the congregated dwellings of a whole nation.

I know that to many, the public is a kind of vague abstraction: and that what is done against the public—the public interest, law, or virtue —presses lightly on the conscience. Yet what is this public, but a vast expansion of individual life?—an ocean of tears, an atmosphere of sighs; or a surrounding world of joy and gladness? It suffers with the suffering of millions; it rejoices with the joy of millions. Who then art thou—private man or public man, agent or contractor, senator or magistrate, cabinet secretary or lofty president—who art thou that darest, with indignity and wrong, to strike the bosom of the public welfare? Who art thou, that with vices, like the daggers of a parricide, darest to pierce that mighty heart, in which the ocean of existence is flowing?

But have we, in this general view, presented all that belongs to social life? No; there are other relations. You are a parent or a child, a brother or a sister, a husband, wife, friend, or associate. What an unequalled interest lies in the virtue of every one whom thou lovest! Ay, in his virtue, nowhere but in his virtue, is garnered up the incomparable treasure. Thy brother, thy husband, thy friend—what carest thou for, compared with what thou carest for his honour, his fidelity, his kindness? Thy parent—how venerable is his rectitude!—how sacred his reputation!—and what blight is there to thee, like his dishonour! Thy child—ay, thy child! be thou heathen or Christian, thou wouldst have him do well: thou hast poured out all the fulness of parental love in the one desire, that he may do well; that he may be worthy of thy cares and thy freely-bestowed gains; that he may walk in the way of honour and happiness. And yet he cannot walk one step in that way without virtue. Such, yes such, is life in its relationships. A thousand clasping ties embrace it; each one sensitive and thrilling

to the touch; each one like the strings of a delicate instrument, capable of sweet melodies and pleasures; but each one, wounded, lacerated, broken, by rudeness, by anger, and by guilty indulgence.

But that life, my friends, whose springs of powerful action are felt in every department and relationship of society; whose impulses are abroad everywhere, like waves upon the boundless sea—that life gathers up and concentrates all its energies upon the individual mind and heart. To that individual experience—to mine, to yours—I would last appeal.

The personal experience of life, I say—by what strange fatality is it, that it can escape the calls which religion and virtue make upon it? Oh! if it were something else; if it were something duller than it is; if it *could*, by any process, be made insensible to pain and pleasure; if the human heart were but made a thing as hard as adamant, then were the case a different one; then might avarice, ambition, sensuality, channel out their paths in it, and make it their beaten way, and none might wonder at it, or protest against it. If we *could* but be patient under the load of a worldly life; if we could — O Heaven! how impossible!—if we could bear the burthen, as beasts of burthen bear it; then as beasts might we bend all our thoughts to the earth, and no call from the great heavens above us might startle us from our plodding and earthly course.

But to what a being, to what a nature, am I permitted in the name of truth and religion to speak? If I might use the freedom with which one would speak to a son, who was casting off all holy bonds, I should say—"You are not a stone; you are not an earth-clod; you are not an insensible brute; yet you ought to be such, to refuse the call of reason and conscience. Your body should be incapable of pain, and your soul of remorse. But such you are not, and cannot make yourself." When the great dispensation of life presses down upon you, my friend, how is it with you? You weep; you suffer and sorrow. I hold every human being to that. Think what we will; speculate as wildly, doubt as rashly, as we can, yet here is a matter of fact. Cold, dead, earthly, or philosophic, as we may be, yet we are beings that weep, that suffer, and sorrow. What! sorrow and agony—can they dwell in the same heart with worldliness and irreligion, and desire no other companionship? Tell me not of the recklessness of melancholy and disappointment, or the desperation of vice. Say not, *young* man, that you care nothing what befalls in this miserable and worthless life. Recklessness, with its scornful lip and its smothered anger — desperation, with its knitted brow and its glaring eye—I have seen it; and what is it? What is it, but agony—agony which almost chokes the voice that is all the while striving to tell us how calm and indifferent it is?

But let us look at the matter coolly—coolly as if it were a matter of the most deliberate calculation. You are a toiler in the field of life. You would not consent to labour for a week, nor for a day—no, and you will not lift one burthen from the earth without a recompense. Are you willing to bear those burthens of the heart—fear, anxiety, disappointment, trouble—compared with which the severest toil is a pleasure and a pastime; and all this without any object or use? You are a lover of pleasure. And you would not voluntarily forego an hour's pleasure without some object to be gained by it—the preservation of health, or the prospect of future, compensatory enjoyments. Are you

willing then to suffer, to be sick or afflicted—for so, from time to time, does the dispensation of life press upon you—are you willing to have days and months lost to comfort and joy, overshadowed with calamity and grief, without any advantage, any compensation? You are a dealer in the merchandise of this world. You would not, without a return, barter away the most trifling article of that merchandise. Will you thus barter away the dearest treasures of your heart, the very sufferings of your heart? Will you sell the very life-blood from your failing frame and fading cheek, will you sell tears of bitterness, and groans of anguish for nothing? Can human nature—frail, feeling, sensitive, sorrowing human nature—afford to suffer for nothing?

I have touched now upon the darker colouring of human experience; but that experience, whether bright or dark, is all vivid; it is all, according to the measure of every one's power, earnest and affecting; it is all, in its indications, solemn and sublime; it is all moving and monitory. In youth, in age, it is so; in mature vigour, in failing and declining strength; in health and in sickness; in joy and in sorrow; in the musings of solitude, and amidst the throng of men; in privacy, and amidst the anxieties and intrigues of public station; in the bosom of domestic quietude, and alike in the press and shock of battle—everywhere, human life is a great and solemn dispensation. Man, suffering, enjoying, loving, hating, hoping, fearing,—now soaring to heaven, and now sinking to the grave—man is ever the creature of a high and stupendous destiny. In his bosom is wrapt up a momentous, an all-comprehending experience, whose unfolding is to be, in ages and worlds unknown. Around this great action of existence, the curtains of time are drawn, but there are openings through them, to the visions of eternity. God from on high looks down upon this scene of human probation; Jesus hath interposed for it with his teachings and his blood; heaven above waits with expectation, hell from beneath is moved at the fearful crisis; everything, everything that exists around us, every movement in nature, every counsel of providence, every interposition of heavenly grace, centres upon one point—upon one point—*the fidelity of man!*

Will he not be faithful—will he not be thoughtful—will he not do the work that is given him to do? To his lot—such a lot; to his wants, weighing upon him like mountains; to his sufferings, lacerating his bosom with agony; to his joys, offering foretaste of heaven; to all this tried and teaching life, will he not be faithful? Will not you? Shall not I, my brother? If not, what remains, what can remain, to be done for us! If we will not hear these things, neither should we believe though one rose from the dead. No; though the ghosts of the departed and the remembered should come at midnight through the barred doors of our dwellings; though the sheeted dead should stalk through the very aisles of our churches,—they could not more powerfully teach us than the dread realities of life;—nay more, and those memories of mis-spent years, too, those ghosts of departed opportunities, that point to our consciences and point to eternity, saying, "Work while the day lasts, for the night of death cometh, in which no man can work!"

LIFE IS WHAT WE MAKE IT.

TITUS i. 15: "Unto the pure all things are pure."

AND to expand the same sentiment a little, all things bear to us a character corresponding with the state of our own minds. Life is what we make it; and the world is what we make it.

I can conceive, that to some who hear me, this may appear to be a very singular, if not extravagant statement. You look upon this life and upon this world, and you derive from them, it may be, a very different impression. You see the earth, perhaps, only as a collection of blind, obdurate, inexorable elements and powers. You look upon the mountains that stand fast for ever; you look upon the seas that roll upon every shore their ceaseless tides; you walk through the annual round of the seasons; all things seem to be fixed—summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, growth and decay; and so they are. But does not the mind, after all, spread its own hue over all these scenes? Does not the cheerful man make a cheerful world? Does not the sorrowing man make a gloomy world? Does not every mind make its own world? Does it not—as if indeed a portion of the Divinity were imparted to it—does it not almost create the scene around it? Its power, in fact, scarcely falls short of the theory of those philosophers who have supposed that the world has no existence at all, but in our own minds. So again with regard to human life, it seems to many, probably, unconscious as they are of the mental and moral powers which control it, as if it were made up of fixed conditions, and of immense and impassable distinctions. But upon all conditions presses down one impartial law. To all situations, to all fortunes, high or low, the mind gives their character. They are, in effect, not what they are in themselves, but what they are to the feeling of their possessors. The king upon his throne, and amidst his court, may be a mean, degraded, miserable man; a slave to ambition, to voluptuousness, to fear, to every low passion. The peasant in his cottage may be the real monarch; the moral master of his fate; the free and lofty being—more than a prince in happiness—more than a king in honour. And shall the mere names which these men bear, blind us to the actual positions which they occupy amidst God's creation? No; beneath the all-powerful law of the heart, the master is often a slave, and the slave—is master.

It has been maintained, I know, in opposition to the view which we take of life, that man is the creature of circumstances. But what is there in the circumstances of the slave to make him free in spirit, or of

the monarch to make him timid and timeserving? This doctrine of fate—that man is but a bubble upon the sea of his fortunes, that he is borne, a helpless and irresponsible being, upon the tide of events—is no new doctrine, as some of its modern advocates seem to suppose; it has always formed a leading part of the creed of Atheism. But I ask if the reverse of this doctrine is not obviously true. Do not different men bring out of the same circumstances totally different results? Does not that very difficulty, distress, poverty, or misfortune, which breaks down one man, build up another, and make him strong? It is the very attribute, the glory of a man; it is the very power and mastery of that will which constitutes one of his chief distinctions from the brute, that he can bend the circumstances of his condition to the intellectual and moral purposes of his nature.

But it may be said, that the mind itself is the offspring of culture; that is to say, the creature of circumstances. This is true, indeed, of early childhood. But the moment that the faculty of moral will is developed, a new element is introduced, which changes the whole complexion of the argument. Then a new power is brought upon the scene, and it is a ruling power. It is delegated power from heaven. There never was a being sunk so low, but God has thus given him the power to rise. God commands him to rise, and therefore it is certain that he can rise. Every man has the power, and every man should use it, to make all situations, all trials and temptations, conspire to the promotion of his virtue and happiness. In this, then, the only intelligible sense, man, so far from being the creature of circumstances, creates them, controls them, makes them, that is to say, to be all they are of evil or good to him as a moral being.

Life, then, is what we make it, and the world is what we make it. Even our temporary moods of mind, and, much more, our permanent character, whether social or religious, may be appealed to, as illustrative of this truth.

I. Observe, in the first place, the effect of our most casual moods of mind.

It is the same creation upon which the eyes of the cheerful and the melancholy man are fixed; yet how different are the aspects which it bears to them! To the one, it is all beauty and gladness; "the waves of ocean roll in light, and the mountains are covered with day." It seems to him as if life went forth rejoicing upon every bright wave, and every shining bough shaken in the breeze. It seems as if there were more than the eye seeth—a presence—a presence of deep joy—among the hills and the valleys, and upon the bright waters. But now, the gloomy man, stricken and sad at heart, stands idly or mournfully gazing at the same scene, and what is it? What is it to him? The very light, "bright effluence of bright essence increate,"—yet the very light seems to him as a leaden pall thrown over the face of nature. All things wear to his eye a dull, dim, and sickly aspect. The great train of the seasons is passing before him, but he sighs and turns away, as if it were the train of a funeral procession; and he wonders within himself at the poetic representations and sentimental rhapsodies that are lavished upon a world so utterly miserable. Here, then, are two different worlds in which these two classes of beings live; and they are formed and made what they are, out of the very same scene, only by

different states of mind in the beholders. The eye maketh that which it looks upon. The ear maketh its own melodies or discords. The world without reflects the world within.

II. Again; this life, this world, is what we make it by our social character; by our adaptation, or want of adaptation, to its social conditions, relationships, and pursuits. To the selfish, to the cold and insensible, to the haughty and presuming, to the proud, who demand more than they are likely to receive, to the jealous, who are always afraid they shall not receive enough, to the unreasonably sensitive about others' good or ill opinion, and in fine, to the violators of social laws, of all sorts—the rude, the violent, the dishonest, and the sensual,—to all these, the social condition, from its very nature, will present annoyances, disappointments, and pains, appropriate to their several characters. Every disposition and behaviour has a kind of magnetic attraction, by which it draws to it its like. Selfishness will hardly be a central point, around which the benevolent affections will revolve; the cold-hearted may expect to be treated with coldness, and the proud with haughtiness, the passionate with anger, and the violent with rudeness; and those who forget the rights of others, must not be surprised if their own are forgotten; and those who forget their dignity, who stoop to the lowest embraces of sense, must not wonder if others are not concerned to find their prostrate honour, and to lift it up to the remembrance and respect of the world. Thus, the bad make the social world they live in. So, also, do the good. To the gentle, how many will be gentle—to the kind, how many will be kind! How many does a lovely example win to goodness! How many does meekness subdue to a like temper, when they come into its presence! How many does sanctity purify—how many does it command to put away all earthly defilements when they step upon its holy ground! Yes, a good man, a really good man, will find that there is goodness in the world; and an honest man will find that there is honesty in the world; a man of principle will find principle, yes, a principle of religious integrity, in the hearts of others. I know that this is sometimes denied, and denied with much scorn and self-complacency. But when a man says that true religious virtue is all a pretence, though the charge is put forward in quite another guise, I confess that I most of all suspect the heart of the complainant. I suspect that it is a heart itself estranged from truth and sanctity, that can find no truth nor sincerity in all the religious virtue that is around it. True, most true, most lamentably true it is,—nothing is *so* lamentably true, as that there is too little religious fervour in the world: but still there is a feeling; there is some religious sensibility,—the most precious deposit in the heart of society,—there is some anxiety on this great theme, holy and dear, to him whose mind is touched with that inexpressible emotion; and he whose mind is so touched will as certainly find those deep tokens of the soul's life, as the kindling eye will find beauty amidst the creation, or as the attuned ear will find the sweet tone of music amidst the discords of nature. Thus it is, that the mind discovers social virtue, and developes the social world around it. The corrupt mind elicits what is bad; and the pure mind brings out what is good.

But the pure mind makes its own social world in another sense. It not only unfolds that word to itself, but all its relations to society are

sanctified; the otherwise rough contacts of life are softened to it, and its way is graciously made smooth and easy. The general complaint is, that society is full of mistrust and embarrassment, of competitions and misunderstandings, and unkind criticisms, and unworthy jealousies. But let any one bear within him an humble mind; let him be too modest to make any unreasonable demands upon others, too mistrustful and tenderly solicitous about the keeping of his own heart, to be severe or censorious; let him simply be a good man—full of true and pure love to those around him—full of love to God—full of holy indifference to earthly vanities—full of the heavenward thought, that soars far beyond them; and what now has this man to do with worldly strifes and intrigues, with poor questions of precedence, and the small items of unsettled disputes, and unsatisfied suspicions? An excellent simplicity that cannot understand them—a high aim that cannot bend its eye upon them—a generous feeling that cannot enter into them—a goodness that melts all difference into harmony—this is the wise man's protection and blessing.

III. I have spoken of the world of nature, and of the world of society. There is also a world of events, of temptations, and trials, and blessings; and this, too, is what we make it. It is what we make it by our religious character.

There are no blessings—and it is a stupendous truth that I utter—there are no blessings which the mind may not convert into the bitterest of evils; and there are no trials which it may not transform into the most noble and divine of blessings. There are no temptations from which the virtue they assail may not gain strength, instead of falling a sacrifice to them. I know that the virtue often falls. I know that the temptations have great power. But what is their power? It lies in the weakness of our virtue. Their power lies not in them, but in us, in the treason of our own hearts. To the pure, all things are pure. The proffer of dishonest gain, of guilty pleasure, makes them more pure; raises their virtue to the height of towering indignation. The fair occasion, the safe opportunity, the goodly chance of victory, with which sin approaches the heart, to ensnare and conquer it—all are turned into defeat and disgrace for the tempter, and into the triumph and confirmation of virtue. But to the impure, to the dishonest, falsehearted, corrupt, and sensual, occasions come every day, and in every scene, and through every avenue of thought and imagination. To the impure, occasions come, did I say—rather, do they make occasions; or if occasions, if opportunities come not, evil *thoughts* come; no hallowed shrine, no holy temple, no sphere of life, though consecrated to purity and innocence, can keep them out. So speaketh the sacred text, and in this very striking language: "To the pure, all things are pure; but to them that are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; for even their mind and conscience is defiled."

Thus might we pass in survey all the circumstances of man's earthly condition, and bring from every state and pursuit of human life, the same conclusion. Upon the irreligious man, the material world has the effect to occupy him, and estrange him from God; but to the devout man, the same scene is a constant ministration of high and holy thoughts. Thus, also, the business of this world, while it absorbs, corrupts, and degrades one mind, builds up another in the most noble independence,

integrity, and generosity. So, too, pleasure, which to some is a noxious poison, is, to others, a healthful refreshment. The scene is the same. The same event happeneth to all. Life is substantially the same thing to all who partake of its lot. Yet some rise to virtue and glory, and others sink, from the same discipline, from the same privileges, to shame and perdition.

Life, then, we repeat, is what we make it, and the world is what we make it. Life, that is to say, takes its colouring from our own minds; the world, as the scene of our welfare or wo, is, so to speak, moulded in the bosom of human experience. The archetypes, the ideal forms of things without—if not, as some philosophers have said, in a metaphysical sense, yet in a moral sense—they exist within us. The world is the mirror of the soul. Life is the history, not of outward events —not of outward events chiefly—but life, human life, is the history of a mind. To the pure, all things are pure. To the joyous, all things are joyous. To the gloomy, all things are gloomy. To the good, all things are good. To the bad, all things are bad. The world is nothing but a mass of materials, subject to a great moral experiment. The human breast is the laboratory. We work up those materials into what forms we please. This illustration too—if any one should take me too literally—will furnish the proper qualification. The materials, indeed, are not absolutely under our control. They obey the laws of a higher power. Those laws, too, are fixed laws. Yet the chemist in his laboratory accomplishes all that he rationally desires to accomplish. The elements are enough under his command to answer all his purposes. Nay, if they did not furnish difficulties and require experiments, his science would not exist; his knowledge would be intuition. So with the moral experimenter. He has to overcome difficulties, to solve questions; still, within the range of national wishes, and in submission to the power of God, he can work out what results he pleases; and if there were no difficulties, there would be no virtue, no moral science of life.

I am sensible that I have dwelt at considerable length upon the proofs of my doctrine; but I must beg your indulgence to some farther consideration of it, in application to two states of mind: I mean to complaint and discouragement. These states of mind have, indeed, the same leaning, but still they are very different. Complaint is bold and open-mouthed, and speaks like one injured and wronged. Discouragement is timid and silent: it does not consider whether it is wronged, but it knows that it is depressed, and at times almost crushed to the earth. There are many minds to be found in one or other of these conditions. Indeed, I think that the largest amount of human suffering may be found in the form either of complaint or of discouragement; and if there be anything in the doctrine of this discourse, to disarm the one, or to relieve the other, it well deserves a place in our meditations.

Our complaints of life mainly proceed upon the ground that, for our unhappiness, something is in fault besides ourselves; and I maintain that this ground is not fairly taken. We complain of the world; we complain of our situation in the world.

Let us look a moment at this last point—what is called a situation in the world. In the first place, it is commonly what we make it, in a

literal sense. We are high or low, rich or poor, honoured or disgraced, usually, just in proportion as we have been industrious or idle, studious or negligent, virtuous or vicious. But in the next place, suppose that, without any fault of our own, our situation is a trying one. Doubtless it is so, in many instances. But then I say, that the main point affecting our happiness in this case, is not our situation, but the spirit with which we meet it. In the humblest conditions are found happy men; in the highest, unhappy men. And so little has mere condition to do with happiness, that a just observation, I am persuaded, will find about an equal proportion of it among the poor and the rich, the high and the low. "But *my* relation to the persons or things around me," one may say, "is peculiarly trying; neither did I choose the relation; I would gladly escape from it." Still I answer, a right spirit may bring from this very relation the noblest virtue and the noblest enjoyment. "Ah! the right spirit!"—it may be said—"to obtain that is my greatest difficulty. Doubtless, if I had the spirit of an angel, or of an apostle, I might get along very well. Then I should not be vexed, nor angered, nor depressed. But the very effort to gain that serene and patient mind, is painful, and often unsuccessful." Yes, and the ill success is the pain. It is not true, that thorough, faithful endeavour to improve is unhappy; that honest endeavour, I mean, which is always successful. On the contrary, it is, this side heaven, the highest happiness. The misery of the effort is owing to its insufficiency. The misery, then, is mainly our own fault.

On every account, therefore, I must confess, that I am disposed to entertain a very ill opinion of misery. Whether regarded as proceeding from a man's condition or from his own mind, I cannot think well of it. I cannot look upon it with the favour which is accorded to it by much modern poetry and sentiment. These sentimental sighings over human misfortune which we hear, are fit only for children, or at least for the mind's childhood. You may say if you will, that the preacher's heart is hard when he avers this, or that he knows not trial or grief; but if you do, it will be because you do not understand the preacher's argument—no, nor his mind either. What I say to you, I say to myself—the mind's misery is chiefly its own fault. Sentimental sighings there may be in early youth, and in a youthful and immature poetry; but he who has come to the manhood of reason and experience, should know, what is true, that the mind's misery is chiefly its own fault; nay, more, and is appointed, under the good providence of God, as the punisher and corrector of its fault. Trial is indeed a part of our lot; but suffering is not to be confounded with trial. Nay, amidst the severest trials, the mind's happiness may be the greatest that it ever knew. It has been so in a body racked with pain—nay, and in a body consumed by the fire of the martyr's sacrifice. I am willing, however, to allow that some exceptions are to be made; as for instance, in the first burst of grief or in the pains of lingering disease. The mind must have time for reflection, and it must have strength left to do its work. But its very work, its very office of reflection, is to bring good out of evil—happiness out of trial. And when it is rightly guided, this work it will do; to this result it will come. In the long run, it will be happy, just in proportion to its fidelity and wisdom. Life will be what it makes life to be, and the world will be what the mind makes it. With arti-

ficial wants, with ill-regulated desires, with selfish and sensitive feelings of its own cherishing, the mind must be miserable. And what then is its misery? Hath it not planted in its own path the thorns that annoy it? And doth not the hand that planted, grasp them? Is not the very loudness of the complaint, but the louder *confession*, on the part of him who makes it?

The complaint nevertheless with some is very loud. "It is *not* a happy world," a man says, "but a very miserable world; those who consider themselves saints may talk about a kind providence; *he* cannot see much of it: those who have all their wishes gratified may think it is very well; but he never *had his* wishes gratified; and nobody cares whether he is gratified or not; everybody is proud and selfish," he says; "if there *is* so much goodness in the world, he wishes he could see some of it. This beautiful world! as some people call it—for his part he never saw anything very beautiful in it; but he has seen troubles and vexations, clouds and storms enough; and he has had long, tedious, weary days, and dark and dull nights; if he could sleep through his whole life, and never want anything, it would be a comfort." Mistaken man! doubly mistaken—mistaken about the world—mistaken in thyself; the world thou complainest of is not God's world, but thy world; it is not the world which God made, but it is the world which thou hast made for thyself. The fatal blight, the dreary dulness, the scene so distasteful and dismal, is all in thyself. The void, the blank, amidst the whole rich and full universe, is in thy heart. Fill thy heart with goodness, and thou wilt find that the world is full of good. Kindle a light within, and then the world will shine brightly around thee. But till then, though all the luminaries of heaven shed down their entire and concentrated radiance upon this world, it would be dark to thee. "The light that should be in thee is darkness, and how great is that darkness!"

But I must turn in close, to address myself for a moment to a very different state of mind, and that is discouragement. Complaint is to be blamed; but there is a heavy and uncomplaining discouragement, pressing upon many minds, which demands a kinder consideration. They have tried and not succeeded; they have tried again, and failed of the ends, the objects, which they sought; and they say, at length, "We give over; we can never *do* anything in this world; ill fortune has taken the field against us, and we will battle with it no longer." Yet more to be pitied are those who have never had even the courage to strive; who, from their very cradle, have felt themselves depressed by untoward circumstances, by humble state or humble talents. Oftentimes the mind in such a case is, in culture and power, far beyond its own estimate; but it has no aptitude for worldly success; it has no power to cause itself to be appreciated by others; it has no charm of person or speech; it is neglected by society, where almost every one is too much occupied with his own advancement to think of pining merit; it is left to silent and solitary hours of discouragement and despondency. And in such hours—perhaps there are some here present who can bear me witness—the thoughts that sink deeply into the heart, though never, it may be, breathed in words, are such as these:—"*My* chance in this world is a poor one; I have neither wealth, nor talents, nor family—I have nothing to give me importance; I have no friends to help me

forward, or to introduce me favourably to the world; I have no path open to me; my success is poor, even my expectation is poor. Let the fortunate be thankful; but I am not fortunate; the great prizes are not for me; despond I needs must, for hope I have none; I will sit down in silence, and eat the bread of a neglected lot; I will weep—but even that is useless; away then, hope! away, tears!—I will bear my heart calmly, though sadly, in its way through a cold, ungenial, unkind world."

And yet above this man is spread the sublimity of heaven, around him the beauty of earth; to this man is unfolded the vision of God; for this man Christ hath died, and to him heaven is unveiled; before this man lies the page of wisdom and inspiration; and wisdom and sanctity it is still given him to learn and gain—wisdom and sanctity, inward, all-sufficing and eternal. The universe is full and rich for him. The heaven of heavens invites him to its abode.

Oh! the intolerable worldliness of the world!—the worldliness of fashion and fashionable opinion! the worldliness of our eager throngs and our gay watering-places, and our crowded cities, and our aspiring literature, and our busy commerce! Distinction! to be raised a little above the rest—to be talked of and pointed at more than others—this hath blinded us to the infinite good that is offered to all men. And this distinction—what is it after all? Suppose that you were the greatest of the great; one raised above kings; one to whom courts and powers and principalities paid homage, and around whom admiring crowds gathered at every step. I tell you that I would rather have arrived at one profound conclusion of the sage's meditation in his dim study, than to win that gaze of the multitude. I tell you that I had rather gain the friendship and love of one pure and lofty mind, than to gain that empty applause of a court or a kingdom. What then must it be to gain the approval, the friendship, the love of that ONE, infinitely great—infinitely dear to the whole pure and happy creation?

Before these awful and sublime realities of truth and sanctity, sink all worldly distinction and worldly imaginations! Discouragement and despondency!—for a creature to whom God hath offered the loftiest opportunity and hope in the universe? An humble, depressed, unfortunate lot!—for him, before whom are spread the boundless regions of truth, and wisdom, and joy? A poor chance!—for him who may gain heaven? Ah! sir, thy poverty, thy misfortune, is all in thyself. In the realm of God's beneficence is an infinite fulness, and it all may be yours. Even to the despised and persecuted Christians of old the Apostle said this; and it is still and for ever true, to all who can receive it. "Therefore," says he, in his lofty reasoning, "let no man glory in men; for all things are yours; whether the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's!"

ON INEQUALITY IN THE LOT OF LIFE.

PSALM cxlv. 9: "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

WHAT I wish to suggest for your consideration from these words, is not the goodness of God only, but his goodness to all. I wish, in other words, to examine the prevailing opinion, that there is a great inequality in the distribution of the blessings of life. In opposition to this opinion, I take up the words of the text.

The Lord is good *to all*. It is not said, merely, that his tender mercies are over his works, but that they are over *all* his works. His providence is not only kind, but its kindness extends to every human being.

There is no general view of life, perhaps, with which the minds of men are more strongly impressed, than with the apparent inequalities of the human lot. It is probably the most prolific source of all secret repining and open complaint. Affliction of a severe kind comes but seldom; but this inequality in the state of life is permanent. It is perfectly obvious, too. Every one can see the difference between his situation in life, his dwelling, his equipage, and the observance which is paid to him—and those which belong to his more prosperous, wealthy, or honoured neighbour. The distinctions of life indeed chiefly consist in the glare of outward things, and therefore more powerfully impress the senses.

Now, if it can be made to appear that there is, in fact, considerable deception in these estimates; that things are far more impartially balanced in the system of providence at large than is commonly imagined; that inequality is not the rule of its operations, but only the exception to the rule,—it would serve the important purpose of making us more contented with our lot, more happy in the opportunities and means of happiness that are given to us all, and more submissive and grateful, I would hope, to that Being who has so equally and so bountifully distributed them.

To this subject, then, let me direct your thoughts this morning.

I. And in the first place, you see, at once, an instance and an illustration of this impartiality of Divine Providence, in the inequalities caused by nature; in the allotments of climate, temperature, soil, and scenery.

There is no one of us, perhaps, whose thoughts have not sometimes wandered to fairer climes than our own, to lands of richer productions and more luxuriant beauty, to those isles and shores of the classic East,

where all the glory of man has faded indeed—where all the monuments of his power and art have fallen to decay—but where nature lives for ever, and for ever spreads its unfading charm; to the verdant and sunny vales of the South—regions of eternal Spring—where the circling seasons, as they pass, let fall no chill or blight upon the fresh and fragrant bosom of the earth. But is there no counterpart to this scene? Where does the volcano lift up its subterraneous thunders, and pour forth its flaming deluge? It is in these very regions of eternal Spring. It is on the green and flowery mount, on the vine-clad hills—fast by the quiet fold of the shepherd, and amidst the rejoicings of the vintage. Whence comes the fearful rumour of the earthquake that has whelmed a city in ruins? It comes from the land of the diamond and the cane; from the hills of Ophir; from groves of the palm and the olive; from vallies loaded with fruits, and fanned with aromatic gales—where, if nature is more energetic to produce, she is also more energetic to destroy. Where does the dire pestilence walk in darkness, and the fell destruction waste at noonday? Amidst groves of spices, and beneath bowers of luxuriance; and the beam that lights its victims to their tomb is the brightest beam of heaven, and the scenes of which they take their last hasty leave, are the fairest that nature displays—as if life and death were intended to be set in the most visible and vivid contrast. And where, but there also, is that worse than plague, and pestilence, and earthquake—that degradation of the mind—that wide-spreading pestilence of the soul—that listless indolence, which only arouses to deeds of passion? Let the millions of Southern Asia tell. Let Turkey, so often drenched with blood, answer. Let the wandering Arab, let the stupid Hottentot, let the slothful and sensual inhabitants of the fair isles of the Pacific teach us. Who would not rather struggle with fiercer elements, than sink an ignoble prey to the soft languors of pleasure, and the besotting indulgences of passion? Who would not far prefer our wintry storm, and "the hoarse sighings of the east wind," as it sweeps around us, if they will brace the mind to nobler attainments, and the heart to better duties?

There is one class of virtues that is fostered by the rigours of our climate, which deserves to be particularly noticed. I mean the *domestic* virtues. We are compelled by the inclemency of our seasons, not only to have some permanent place of abode, but to resort to it. In milder regions, men live abroad—they are scarcely obliged to have any domicile. We are compelled to live at home, and we attach a meaning to the term, and we hallow it with feelings that were unknown to the polished Greek and the voluptuous Asiatic. It is the angry and lowering sky of winter that lights up the cheerful fire in our dwellings, and draws around the friendly circle. It is the cheerlessness of everything abroad, that leads us to find or make pleasures within; to resort to books and the interchange of thought; to multiply the sources of knowledge, and strengthen the ties of affection. It is the frowning face of nature, like the dark cloud of adversity, that lends attraction to all the sympathies and joys of home.

II. But I come now, in the second place, to consider the impartiality of Divine Providence, in the condition of human life. Life—to borrow a comparison from the science of political economy—life, like nature, is a system of checks and balances. Every power of conferring happi-

ness is limited or else counteracted by some other power, either of good or evil. There is no blessing or benefit, but it has some drawback upon it; and there is no inconvenience or calamity, but it enjoys some compensation. This results from the very nature of things. You cannot enjoy things incompatible. You cannot at once enjoy, for instance, the pleasures of the country and the town. You cannot mingle the quietude of obscurity with the emoluments and honours of office. You cannot have, at the same time, the benefits of affliction, and the joys of prosperity. If you would reach the loftiest virtue, you must sometimes endure sickness and pain, and you must sometimes be bowed down with sorrow. If you would have perpetual ease and indulgence, you must resign something of noble fortitude, holy patience, and of the blessed triumphs of faith.

The inequalities which appear in the condition of human life, relate chiefly to the possessions, the employments, or the distinctions of society. If we should examine these, we should probably find that they are of less importance to our happiness than is commonly imagined. Indeed, we know that they all depend chiefly on the use that is made of them; and their use depends upon the mind. Distinction and mediocrity, leisure and toil, wealth and poverty, have no intrinsic power of happiness or misery in their disposal. There is a principle within, that is to render them good or evil.

But, not at present to insist on this, these circumstances of inequality, in themselves, are less than they seem. It is common, I know, to hear of the prerogatives, the power, the independence of the higher classes of society. But Divine Providence acknowledges no such nobility; no such exemption from the wants of the human lot. It teaches us very little about prerogative or independence, however the pride of man may flatter him. No tower of pride was ever high enough to lift its possessor above the trials, and fears, and frailties of humanity. No human hand ever built the wall, nor ever shall, that will keep out affliction, pain, and infirmity. Sickness, sorrow, trouble, death, are all levelling dispensations. They know none, high nor low. The chief wants of life, too, the great necessities of the human soul, give exemption to none. They make all poor, all weak. They put supplication in the mouth of every human being, as truly as in that of the meanest beggar.

Now consider society for one moment, in regard to its employments. And there is not, perhaps, a greater infatuation in the world, than for a man of active and industrious habits, to look with envy or repining upon the ease and leisure of his neighbour. Employment, activity, is one of the fundamental laws of human happiness. Ah! the laborious indolence of him who has nothing to do; the preying weariness, the stagnant ennui of him who has nothing to obtain; the heavy hours which roll over him, like the waters of a Lethean sea, that has not yet quite drowned the senses in their oblivious stupor; the dull comfort of having finished a day; the dreariness in prospect of another to come; in one word, the terrible visitation of an avenging Providence to him that lives to himself!

But I need not dwell on a case so obvious, and proceed at once to mention the distinction of wealth and poverty.

It must not be denied that poverty, abject and desperate poverty, is

a great evil; but this is not a common lot, and it still more rarely occurs in this country without faults or vices, which should forbid all complaint. Neither shall it here be urged, on the other hand, that riches are acquired with many labours, and kept with many cares and anxieties; for so also it may be said, and truly said, has poverty its toils and anxieties. The true answer to all difficulties on this subject seems to be, that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth. The answer, in short, may be reduced to a plain matter of fact. There is about as much cheerfulness among the poor, as among the rich. And I suspect about as much contentment too. For we might add, that a man's life, if it consist at all in his possessions, does not consist in what he possesses, but in what he thinks himself to possess. Wealth is a comparative term. The desire of property grows, and at the same time the estimate of it lessens, with its accumulation. And thus it may come to pass, that he who possesses thousands may less feel himself to be rich, and to all substantial purposes may actually be less rich, than he who enjoys a sufficiency.

But, not to urge this point, we say that a man's life does not consist in these things. Happiness, enjoyment, the buoyant spirits of life, the joys of humanity, do not consist in them. They do not depend on this distinction of being poor or rich. As it is with the earth—that there are living springs within it, which will burst forth somewhere, and that they are often most clear and healthful in the most sterile and rugged spots—so it is with the human heart. There are fountains of gladness in it; and why should they not revive the weary? Why should they not cool the brow of labour, and the lips that are parched with toil? Why should they not refresh the poor man? Nay, but they do; and they refresh him the more, *because* he is poor and weary. Man may hew out to himself cisterns—and how often are they broken cisterns!—which are scrupulously and proudly guarded from his poorer fellow-man; but the great fountains which *God* has opened are for all. This and that man may endeavour to appropriate them to himself: he may guide them to his reservoir; he may cause them to gush forth in artificial fountains, and to fall in artificial showers in his gardens; but it is artificial still: and one draught of the pure well-spring of honest, homely happiness, is better than them all; and the shower which heaven sends, falls upon the rich and the poor, upon the high and the low alike, and, with still more impartial favour, descends upon the good and the evil, upon the just and the unjust.

III. This impartiality will be still more manifest if we reflect, in the third place, that far the greatest and most numerous of the divine favours are granted to all, without any discrimination.

Look, in the first place, at the natural gifts of Providence. The beauty of the earth; the glories of the sky; the vision of the sun and the stars; the beneficent laws of universal being; the frame of society and of government; protecting justice and almighty providence—whose are these? What power of appropriation can say of any one of these, "This is mine, and not another's"? And what one of these would you part with for the wealth of the Indies, or all the splendours of rank or office? Again, your eyesight—that regal glance that commands, in one act, the out-spread and all-surrounding beauty of the fair universe—would you exchange it for a sceptre or a crown? And the ear—that

gathers unto its hidden chambers all music and gladness—would you give it for a kingdom? And that wonderful gift, speech—that breathes its mysterious accents into the listening soul of thy friend; that sends forth its viewless messages through the still air, and imprints them at once upon the ears of thousands—would you barter that gift for the renown of Plato or of Milton?

No, there are unappropriated blessings—blessings which none can appropriate—in every element of nature, in every region of existence, in every inspiration of life, which are infinitely better than all that can be hoarded in treasure, or borne on the breath of fame. All, of which any human being can say, "it is mine," is a toy, is a trifle, compared with what God has provided for the great family of his children! Is *he* poor to whom the great storehouse of nature is opened? or does he think himself poor because it is God who has made him rich? Does *he* complain that he cannot have a magnificent palace to dwell in, who dwells in this splendid theatre of the universe?—that he cannot behold swelling domes and painted walls, who beholds the "dread magnificence of heaven," and the pictured earth and sky? Do you regret the want of attendants, of a train of servants, to anticipate every wish, and bring every comfort at your bidding? Yet how small a thing is it to be waited on, compared with the privilege of being yourself active—compared with the vigour of health, and the free use of your limbs and senses! Is it a hardship that your table does not groan with luxuries? But how much better than all luxury is simple appetite!

The very circumstances which gain for the distinctions of life such an undue and delusive estimation, are such as ought to make us cautious about the estimate we put upon them. They are distinctions and therefore likely to be overrated; but is that a good and sound reason why we should affix to them an undue importance? Are the palaces of kings to be regarded with more interest than the humbler roofs that shelter millions of human beings? What more is the marriage of a queen—to the individual mind—though surrounded with the splendour and state of a kingdom; though accompanied with shining troops, and announced by roaring cannon—what more is it than that marriage of hearts that is every day consummated beneath a thousand lowly roofs? The distinctions of life, too, are mostly factitious, the work of art, and man's device. They are man's gifts, rather than God's gifts; and for that reason I would esteem them less. They are fluctuating also, and therefore attract notice, but on that account, too, are less valuable. They are palpable to the senses, attended with noise and show, and therefore likely to be over-estimated; while those vast benefits which all share, and which are always the same, which come in the ordinary course of things, which do not disturb the ordinary and even tenour of life, pass by unheeded. The resounding chariot, as it rolls on with princely state and magnificence, is gazed upon with admiration, and perhaps with envy. But morning comes forth in the east, and from his glorious chariot-wheels scatters light over the heavens, and spreads life and beauty through the world: morning after morning comes, and noontide sets its throne in the southern sky, and the day finishes its splendid revolution in heaven, without exciting, perhaps, a comment or a reflection. The pageant of fashion passes, and has the notice of many an eye, perhaps, to which it is all in vain that the

seasons pass by in their glory; that nature arrays herself in robes of light and beauty, and fills the earth with her train. To want what another possesses, to be outstripped in the race of honour or gain, to lose some of the nominal treasures of life, may be enough with some of us, to disturb and irritate us altogether; and such an one shall think little of it that he has life itself, and that he enjoys it; it shall be nothing to him that he has quiet sleep in the night season, and that all the bounties of the day are spread before him; that he has friends and domestic joys, and the living fountain of cheerful spirits and affectionate pleasures within him.

Nor must we stop here in our estimate. There is an infinite sum of blessings which have not yet been included in the account; and these, like all the richest gifts of heaven, are open and free to all; I mean the gifts, the virtues, the blessings of religion.

It has already, indeed, sufficiently appeared, not only that the inequalities in the allotments of Providence are attended with a system of compensations and drawbacks, which make them far less than they seem; and also, on account of the vast blessings which are diffused everywhere and dispensed to all; that inequality, instead of being the rule of the Divine dealings, is only a slight exception to them,—but we come now to a principle that absorbs all other considerations: virtue, the only intrinsic, infinite, everlasting good, is accessible to all. If there were ever so strong and apparently just charges of partiality against the Divine Providence, this principle would be sufficient to vindicate it. "O God!" exclaims the Persian poet Sadi, "have pity on the wicked! for thou hast done everything for the good in having made them good!"

How false and earthly are our notions of what is evil! How possible is it that all advantages besides religion may prove the greatest calamities! How possible is it that distinction, that successful ambition, that popular applause, may be the most injurious, the most fatal evil that could befall us! How possible that wealth may be turned into the very worst of curses, by the self-indulgence, the dissipation, the vanity or hardness of heart, that it may produce! And there is a judgment, too, short of the judgment of heaven, that pronounces it to be so—the judgment of every right and noble sentiment, of all good sense, of all true friendship. There is a friend, not a flatterer, who, as he witnesses in some one this sad dereliction, this poor exultation of vanity, this miserable bondage to flattery, or this direful success of some dark temptation—who, as he witnesses this, will say in his secret thoughts, with the Persian sage, "O God! have pity on the wicked; have pity on my friend! would that he were poor and unnoticed, would that he were neglected or forsaken, rather than thus!" It is therefore a matter of doubt whether those things which we crave as blessings would really be such to us. And then, as to the trials of life, their unequalled benefits are a sufficient answer to every objection that can be brought against their unequal distribution.

We hear it said that there is much evil in the world; and this or that scene of suffering is brought as an example of the partial dealings of heaven; and it is felt, if it is not said, perhaps, that "God's ways are unequal." But the strongest objector on this ground, I think, would yield, if he saw that the attendant and fruit of all this suffering were a

fortitude, a cheerfulness, a heavenliness, that shed brighter hues than those of earth upon the dark scene of calamity and sorrow. I have seen suffering, sorrow, bereavement, all that is darkest in human fortunes, clothed with a virtue so bright and beautiful, that sympathy was almost lost in the feeling of congratulation and joy. I have heard more than one sufferer say, "I am thankful; God is good to me;" and when I heard that, I said, "It is good to be afflicted." There is, indeed, much evil in the world; but without it, there would not be much virtue. The poor, the sick, and the afflicted, could be relieved from their trials at once, if it were best for them; but if they understood their own welfare, they would not desire exemption from their part in human trials. There might be a world of ease, and indulgence, and pleasure: but "it is a world," to use the language of another, "from which, if the option were given, a noble spirit would gladly hasten into that better world of difficulty and virtue and conscience, which is the scene of our present existence."

In fine, religion is a blessing so transcendent, as to make it of little consequence what else we have, or what else we want. It is enough for us—it is enough for us all; for him who is poor, for him who is neglected, for him who is disappointed and sorrowful; it is enough for him, though there were nothing else, that he may be good and happy for ever. In comparison with this, to be rich, to be prosperous, and merely that, is the most trifling thing that can be imagined. *Is* it not enough for us, my brethren, that we may gain those precious treasures of the soul which the world cannot give nor take away; that the joys and consolations and hopes of the Spirit and Gospel of Christ may be ours? Has not he a sufficiency—is not his heart full—is not his blessedness complete, who can say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee: all things else may fail; my heart may lose its power, and my strength its firmness; but thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever?"

The lesson, my friends, which these reflections lay before us is this; to learn that we are all partakers of one lot, children of one Father; to learn in whatsoever state we are, therewith to be content, and therein to be grateful. If you are ever tempted to discontent and murmuring, ask yourself, ask the spirit within you, formed for happiness, for glory and virtue, of what you shall complain. Ask the ten thousand mercies of your lives, of what you shall complain: or go and ask the bounties of nature; ask the sun that shines cheerfully upon you; ask the beneficent seasons as they roll, of what you shall complain; ask—ask of your Maker—but God forbid that you or I should be guilty of the heinous ingratitude! No, my friends, let us fix our thoughts, rather, upon the full and overflowing beneficence of heaven—upon the love of God. Let us fix our affections upon it, and then we shall have a sufficiency; then, though some may want and others may complain; though dissatisfaction may prey upon the worldly, and envy may corrode the hearts of the jealous and discontented; for us there shall be a sufficiency indeed; for us there shall be a treasure which the world cannot give, nor change, nor disturb—"an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

ON THE MISERIES OF LIFE.

ROMANS viii. 20: "For the creature—that is man—was made subject to vanity—that is to suffering—not willingly, but by reason of him—or at the will of him—who hath subjected the same in hope."

IN considering the spiritual philosophy of life, we cannot avoid the problem of human misery. The reality presses us on every side, and philosophy demands to sit in judgment on the fact.

I have often wondered that, with such themes as are presented to the pulpit, it could have ever been dull; still more that it should be proverbially dull. So practical are these themes, so profound, so intimate with all human experience, that I cannot conceive what is to be understood, save through utter perversion, by a dull religion, a dull congregation, or a dull pulpit. If there were an invading army just landed upon our shores; if there were a conflagration or a pestilence sweeping through our city, and we were assembled here to consider what was to be done—in all seriousness and most advisedly do I say, that no questions could be raised, on such an occasion, more vital to our welfare, than those which present themselves to us here, on every Sunday. Take off the covering of outward form and demeanour from the heart of society, and what do we see? Is there not a struggle and a war going on—not upon our borders, but in the midst of us—in our dwellings, and in our very souls?—a war, not for territory, nor for visible freedom; but for happiness, for virtue, for inward freedom! Are not misery and vice, as they were fire and pestilence, pressing, urging, threatening to sweep through this city, every day? Is not an interest involved in every day's action, thought, purpose, feeling, that is dearer than merchandise, pleasure, luxury, condition—dearer than life itself?

Does any one say, that religion is some abstract concern, some visionary matter, fit only for weak enthusiasts or doting fools—which has nothing to do with him nor with his real welfare; a thing indifferent—gone and given over to indifference,—beyond all hope of recovery; in which he cannot, for his life, interest himself? Ay, proud philosopher! or vain worldling! sayest thou that? Is misery something abstract—with which thou canst not interest thyself? Is sin—that source of misery—is the wrong thought, the wrong deed—the deed folded, muffled in darkness, the thought shut up in the secret breast, which neither flashing eye nor flushing cheek may tell—is this, I say, something abstract and indifferent? And is the holy peace of conscience, the joy of virtue, a thing for which a human being need not—cannot care? Nay, these are the great, invisible, eternal realities of our life—of our very nature!

I have said that suffering, as the most stupendous fact in human experience, as the profoundest problem in our religious philosophy, presses us on every side. I will not mock you with formal proofs of its existence. And do not think, either, that on this subject I will go into detail or description. One may easily understand human experience—interpret the universal consciousness—too well, to think *that* either needful or tolerable. I will not speak of sicknesses, or disappointments, or bereavements, many though they are. I will not speak of the minds—more in number than we think—that bear the one, solitary, deep-embosomed grief;

> One fatal remembrance, one sorrow that throws
> Its dark shade alike o'er their joys and their woes,
> To which life nothing brighter nor darker can bring,
> For which joy hath no balm, and affliction no sting.

I will not speak of the sighing that rises up from all the world, for a happiness unfound. But I point you to that which is seldom expressed—to that which lies deeper than all—that *eternal want*—which lies as a heavy residuum at the bottom of the cup of life—which albeit unperceived, amidst the flowings and gushings of pleasure, yet when the waters are low, ever disturbs that fountain-head, that living cup of joy, with impatience, anxiety, and blind upheaving effort after something good. Yes, the creature, the human being is made subject to this.—There is a wanting and a wanting, and an ever wanting, of what is never—never on earth—to be obtained! For let us be just here. Religion itself does not altogether assuage that feeling; for even we ourselves, says the Apostle, groan within ourselves. No; religion itself does not suppress that groan; though it does show, and therein is a most blessed visitation, that it can satisfy that feeling as nothing else can, and that it has in it the elements for satisfying it fully and infinitely.

I dwell somewhat upon this point as a matter of fact, my brethren, because I conceive that it is one office of the preacher, as it is of the poet and philosopher, to unfold the human heart and nature, more fully to itself. Strange as the opinion may be thought, I do not believe that men generally know how unhappy, at any rate how far from happiness, they are. That stupendous fact—the soul's misery—is covered up with business, cares, pleasures, and vanities. Were human life unveiled to its depths—were the soul—disrobed of all overlayings and debarred from all opiates—to come down, down to its own naked resources, it seems to me at times that religion would need no other argument. With such apprehension at least as I have of this subject, I feel obliged to preach, as to some, and not a few, who not having taken the religious view of their existence, have come to look upon life with a dull and saddened eye. I believe there are not a few—it may be that they are of the more solitary in the world, and who have not as many stirring objects and prospects in life as others—who look upon the path that stretches before them as cheerless, and threatening to be more and more so as it advances; who say in their silent thoughts, "I shall live, perhaps, too long! I shall live, perhaps, till I am neglected, passed by, forgotten! I shall live, possibly, till I am a burthen to others and to myself. Oh! what may my state be, before I die!"

Yes, "the creature was made subject to misery;" and if you will find a rational being, not under that law, you must seek him without the bounds of this world.

To this case, then, to this great problem involved in human existence, let us give our thoughts this evening.

And in the first place, I would say, let not the vast amount of happiness in this world be forgotten in the sense of its miseries.

They who say that this is a miserable world, or that this is a miserable life, say not well. It is a misanthropy, or a diseased imagination only, that says this. Life is liable to misery, but misery is not its very being; it is not a miserable existence. Witness—I know not what things to say, or how many. The eye is opened to a world of beauty, and to a heaven—all sublimity and loveliness. The ear heareth tones and voices that touch the heart with joy, with rapture. The great, wide atmosphere, breathes upon us—bathes us with softness and fragrance. Then look deeper. How many conditions are happy! Childhood is happy; and youth is prevailingly happy: and prosperity hath its joy, and wealth its satisfaction; and the warm blood that flows in the ruddy cheek and sinewy arm of honest poverty, is a still better gift. No song is so hearty and cheering—none that steals forth from the windows of gay saloons—as the song of honest labour among the hills and mountains. Oh! to be a man—with the true energies and affections of a man—all men feel it to be good. To be a healthful, strong, true-hearted, and loving man—how much better is it, than to be the minion, or master, of any condition—lord, landgrave, king, or Cæsar! How many affections, too, are happy—gratitude, generosity, pity, love, and the consciousness of being beloved! And to bow the heart, in lowliness and adoration, before the Infinite, all-blessing, ever-blessed One—to see in the all-surrounding brightness and glory, not beauty and majesty only, but the all-beautiful, all-majestic, all-conscious *Mind* and *Spirit* of love—this is to be filled with more than created fulness—it is to be filled with all the fulness of God!

A world where such things are—a world, above all, where such a presence is—seemeth to me a goodly world. I look around upon it, I meditate upon it, I feel its blessings and beatitudes; and I say, surely it is a world of plenteousness, and beauty, and gladness, of loves and friendships, of blessed homes and holy altars, of sacred communions, and lofty aspirations, and immortal prospects; and I remember that he who made it, looked upon it, and saw that it was very good. And strange it seemeth, indeed, to our earlier contemplation of it, that in such a world, and beneath the bright skies, there should be the dark stroke of calamity — a serpent winding through this Eden of our existence.

But it is here; and now let us draw nearer, and behold this wonder beneath the heavens — *misery!*

What is its nature? What account are we to take of it? What are we to think of it? On this point I must pray your attention to something of detail and speculation; though I must be, necessarily, brief.

What, then, is the nature of misery? Is it an evil principle, or a good principle in the universe? Is it designed to do us harm, or to do us good? Doubtless the latter; and this can be shown without any very extended or laborious argument.

Misery, then, evidently springs from two causes—from the perfection of our nature, and from the imperfection of our treatment of it—that is, from our ignorance, error, and sin.

I say, that misery springs, first, from the perfection or excellence of our nature. Thus remorse, a pained conscience—that greatest, and though half-benumbed, most wide-spread of all misery—never would afflict us, had we not a moral nature. Make us animals, and we should feel nothing of this. So of our intellectual nature—let poor low instinct take its place, and we should never suffer from ignorance, error, or mistake. And our very bodies owe many of their sufferings and diseases to the delicacy of our nerves, fibres, and senses. Gird a man with the mail of leviathan—arm him with hoofs and claws—and he would have but few hurts, diseases, or pains. But now he is clothed with these veils of living tissues—with this vesture of sensitive feeling, spread all over his frame—that his whole body may be an exquisite instrument of communication with the whole surrounding universe; that earth, air, sky, waters, all their visions, all their melodies, may visit his soul through every pore, and every sense. In such a frame, suffering evidently is the incident, not the intent. And then, in fine, if you ask, whence comes this ever-craving desire of more—more; more happiness, more good, more of everything that it grasps; what does this show primarily, but the extent of the grasp, the largeness of the capacity, the greatness of the nature? That universal sighing, of which I have spoken, which is for ever saying, "who will show me any good?" comes not from the dens and keeps of animals, but from the dwellings of thoughtful, meditative, and immortal men.

But in the next place, I say, that our misery cometh from the imperfection of our treatment of this elevated and much needing nature—from our ignorance, error, and sin. We do not satisfy this nature, and it suffers from vague, ever-craving want. We cannot satisfy it, perhaps; which only the more shows its greatness; but we do not what we *can*, to satisfy it. We wound it, too, by transgression, and it groans over the abuse. We err, perhaps, from want of reflection, and the consequences teach us wisdom. The child that puts his hand in the fire, will not put it there again. A cut finger is a brief lesson—a short copy writ in blood—to teach discretion. The *man* is taught to transfer that lesson to the whole scene of life. All elements, all the laws of things around us, minister to this end; and thus, through the paths of painful error and mistake, it is the design of providence to lead us to truth and happiness.

Is, then, the principle of misery in *this* view an evil principle? If erring but taught us to err; if mistakes confirmed us in imprudence; if the pains of imperfection only fastened its bonds upon us, and the miseries of sin had a natural tendency to make us its slaves, then were all this suffering only evil. But the evident truth on the contrary, is, that it all tends, and is designed to produce amendment, improvement. This so clearly results from the principles of reason, and is so uniformly sustained by the testimony of Scripture, that I do not think it necessary to quote from the one, nor any further to argue from the other.

Misery, then, is a beneficent principle in the universe. He who subjected the creature to misery, subjected him in hope. There is brightness beyond that dark cloud. It is not an inexplicable, unutter-

able, implacable, dark doom,—this ministration of misery; it is meant for good. It is meant to be a ministration to virtue and to happiness.

I say, to virtue and happiness. These are the specifications of what I mean, when I say that suffering is a beneficent principle. It springs from the perfection or excellence of our nature, and thus far, certainly, all is well with our argument. It springs from imperfection in our treatment of it; but it is designed to remove that imperfection; and still, therefore, the path of our argument, though it lead over desolations and ruins, is clear and bright. But still further, I say, that it is not an abstract argument; a mere fair theory having no foundation in truth and fact.

I will reason from your own experience. The pained thought—the painful feeling in you—tell me what it is, and I will tell you how it is made to work out good for you. Is it ennui, satiety, want? All this urges and compels you to seek for action, enlargement, supply. Is it that most sad and painful conviction—the conviction of deficiency or of sin? This directly teaches you to seek for virtue, improvement—for pardon, and the blessedness of pardon. Is it the sorrow of unrequited affection, or a sighing for friendship, in this cold and selfish world, too seldom found? This is an occasion for the loftiest generosity, magnanimity, and candour. Is it sickness, or bereavement—the body's pain, or the heart's desolation? Fortitude, faith, patience, trust in heaven, the hope of heaven—these are so much meant as the end, that, indeed, there are no other resources for pain and deprivation.

And these happy results, I say, have not failed to be produced in the experience of multitudes. It is no visionary dreaming of which I have spoken, but a matter of fact. Even as Christ was made perfect through sufferings, so are his followers. How many have said, in their thoughts, when at last the true light has broken upon them—"Ah! it *is* no contradiction—the dark path *does* lead to light; pain *is* a means of pleasure; misery, of happiness; penitential grief, of virtue; loss, deprivation, sorrow, are the elements—or rather they are the means—of all that is best in my character; it is fortunate for me that I have suffered; it is good for me that I have been afflicted; it is better, how far better with me now, than if I had been always and only happy.

Nay, and even from that comparison, by which past suffering enhances all present and coming enjoyment, I could draw an argument almost sufficient for its vindication, in the great scheme of providence. The pains of a sick and dying child are often referred to, as the most mysterious things in providence; but that child, it should be remembered, may be, and probably will be, happier for ever, for that dark cloud that brooded over the cradle of its infancy. And for myself, I must say, that if I were now standing on the verge of a tried life, with the prospect of everlasting happiness before me, I should not regret that I had been a sufferer; I should count it all joy rather, and be sure that my eternal joy would be dearer for it.

But this is not, it is true, the chief consideration. Suffering is the discipline of virtue—that which nourishes, invigorates, perfects it. Suffering, I repeat, is the discipline of virtue; of that which is infinitely better than happiness, and yet which embraces all essential happiness in it. Virtue is the prize, of the severely contested race, of the hard-fought battle; and it is worth all the strifes and wounds of the conflict.

This is the view which we ought, I think, manfully and courageously to take of our present condition. Partly from our natural weakness, partly from want of reflection, and partly from the discouraging aspects which infidel philosophy and ascetic superstition have thrown over human life, we have acquired a timidity, a pusillanimity, a peevishness, a habit of complaining, which enhances all our sorrows. Dark enough they are, without needing to be darkened by gloomy theories. Enough do we tremble under them, without requiring the misgivings of cherished fear and weakness. Philosophy, religion, virtue, should speak to man —not in a voice, all pity—not in a voice, all terror—but rather in that trumpet tone that arouses and cheers the warrior to battle.

With a brave and strong heart should man go forth to battle with calamity. He shall not let it be his master, but rather shall he master it—yea, he shall be as an artificer, who taketh in his hand an instrument to work out some beautiful work. When Sir Walter Raleigh took in his hand the axe that was in a few moments to deprive him of life, and felt its keen edge, he said, smiling, "this is a sharp medicine, but it will cure all diseases." Indeed, the manner in which the brave English noblemen and clergy of the olden time went to death, even when it was to appease the jealousy or wrath of unjust monarchs, is illustrative of the spirit I would recommend. Fortitude, manliness, cheerfulness, with modesty and humility, dressed them, even on the scaffold, in robes of eternal honour. And surely he who takes an instrument in his hand, which is not to slay him, but with which he may work out the model and perfection of every virtue in him, should take it with resolution and courage; should say, "With this, sore pain or bitter sorrow is a good and noble work for me to do, and well and nobly will I strive to do it. I will not blench nor fly from what my Father above has appointed me. I will not drown my senses and faculties with opiates to escape it. I will not forsake the post of trial and peril." Do you remember that noble boy who stood on the burning deck at the battle of the Nile? Many voices around said, "Come down!—come away!" But the confiding child said, "Father, shall I come?" Alas! that father's voice was hushed in death; and his child kept his post till he sunk in the whelming flame. Oh! noble child! thou teachest us firmly to stand in our lot, till the great word of providence bids us fly, or bids us sink!

But while I speak thus, think me not insensible to the severity of man's sufferings. I know what human nerves, and sinews, and feelings are. When the sharp sword enters the very bosom, the iron enters the very soul—I see what must follow. I see the uplifted hands, the writhen brow, the written agony in the eye. But God's mercy, which "tempers the blast to the shorn lamb," does not suffer these to be the ordinary and permanent forms of affliction. No, thou sittest down in thy still chamber, and sad memories come there, or it may be, strange trials gather under thy brooding thought. Thou art to die; or thy friend must die; or worse still, thy friend is faithless. Or thou sayest that coming life is dark and desolate. And now as thou sittest there, I will speak to thee; and I say—though sighs will burst from thy almost broken heart, yet when they come back in echoes from the silent walls, let them teach thee. Let them tell thee that God wills not thy destruction, thy suffering, for its own sake—wills thee not,

cannot will thee, any evil; how could that thought come from the bosom of infinite love. No, let thy sorrows tell thee, that God wills thy repentance, thy virtue, thy happiness, thy preparation for infinite happiness! Let that thought spread holy light through thy darkened chamber. That which is against thee, is not as that which is for thee. Calamity, a dark speck in thy sky, seemeth to be against thee; but God's goodness, the all-embracing light and power of the universe, for ever lives, and shines around thee and for thee.

"Evil and good before him stand,
Their mission to perform."

The angel of gladness is there; but the angel of affliction is there too—and both alike for good. May the angel of gladness visit us as often as is good for us!—I pray for it. But that angel of affliction! what shall we say to it? Shall we not say—"Come thou too, when our Father willeth—come thou, when need is—with saddened brow and pitying eye, come; and take us on thy wings, and bear us up to hope, to happiness, to heaven—to that presence where is fulness of joys—to that right hand, where are pleasures for evermore"?

There is one further thought which I must not fail to submit to you on this subject before I leave it. The greatness of our sufferings points to a correspondent greatness in the end to be gained. When I see what men are suffering around me, I cannot help feeling that it was meant, not only that they should be far better than they are, but far better than often they think of being. The end must rise higher and brighter before us, before we can look through this dark cloud of human calamity. The struggle, the wounds, the carnage and desolation of a battle, would overwhelm me with horror, if it were not fought for freedom, for the fireside—to protect infancy from ruthless butchery, and the purity of our homes from brutal wrong. So is the battle of this life a bewildering maze of misery and despair, till we see the high prize that is set before it. You would not send your son to travel through a barren and desolate wilderness, or to make a long and tedious voyage to an unhealthy clime, but for some great object: say, to make a fortune thereby. And any way, it seems to your parental affection a strange and almost cruel proceeding. Nor would the merciful Father of life have sent his earthly children to struggle through all the sorrows, the pains, and perils of this world, but to attain to the grandeur of a moral fortune, worth all the strife and endurance. No, all this is not ordained in vain, nor in reckless indifference to what we suffer: but for an end, for a high end, for an end higher than we think for. Troubles, disappointments, afflictions, sorrows, press us on every side, that we may rise upward, upward, ever upward. And believe me, in thus rising upward, you shall find the very names that you give to calamity gradually changing. Misery, strictly speaking, and in its full meaning, does not belong to a good mind. Misery shall pass into suffering, and suffering into discipline, and discipline into virtue, and virtue into heaven. So let it pass with you. Bend now patiently and meekly, in that lowly "worship of sorrow," till, in God's time, it become the worship of joy—of proportionably higher joy—in that world where there shall be no more sorrow, nor pain, nor crying—where all tears shall be wiped from your eyes—where beamings of heaven in your countenance shall grow brighter by comparison with all the darkness of earth.

And remember, too, that your forerunner unto that blessed life, passed through this same worship of sorrow. A *man* of sorrows was that Divine Master, and acquainted with grief. This is the great Sabbath of the year* that commemorates his triumph over sorrow, and pain, and death. And what were the instruments, the means, the ministers of that very victory—that last victory? The rage of men, and the fierceness of torture; arraignment before enemies—mocking, smiting, scourging; the thorny crown, the bitter cross, the barred tomb! With these he fought, through these he conquered, and from these he rose to heaven. And believe me, in something must every disciple be like the master. Clothed in some vesture of pain, of sorrow, or of affliction, must he fight the great battle, and win the great victory. When I stand in the presence of that high example, I cannot listen to poor, unmanly, unchristian complainings. I would not have its disciples account too much of their griefs. Rather would I say, Courage; ye that bear the great, the sublime lot of sorrow! It is not for ever that ye suffer. It is not for nought that ye suffer. It is not without end that ye suffer. God wills it. He spared not his own Son from it. God wills it. It is the ordinance of his wisdom for us. Nay, it is the ordinance of Infinite love, to procure for us an infinite glory and beatitude.

* Easter Sunday.

ON THE SCHOOL OF LIFE.

PSALM lxxi. 17: "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth."

LIFE is a school. This world is a house of instruction. It is not a prison nor a penitentiary, nor a palace of ease, nor an amphitheatre for games and spectacles: it is a school. And this view of life is the only one that goes to the depths of the philosophy of life—the only one that answers the great question, solves the great problem of life. For what is life given? If for enjoyment alone, if for suffering merely, it is a chaos of contradictions. But if for moral and spiritual learning, then everything is full of significance—full of wisdom. And this view, too, is of the utmost practical importance. It immediately presents to us, and presses upon us the question—what are we learning? And is not this, truly, the great question? When your son comes home to you at the annual vacation, it is the first question in your thoughts concerning *him*: and you ask him, or you ask for the certificates and testimonials of his teachers, to give you some evidence of his learning. At every passing term in the great school of life, also, this is the all-important question. What has a man got from the experience, discipline, opportunity of any past period? Not what he has gathered together in the shape of any tangible good; but what has he got—in that other and eternal treasure-house—his mind! Not what of outward accommodation the *literal* scholar has had, should we think it much worth our while to inquire; not whether his text-books had been in splendid bindings; not whether his study-table had been of rich cabinet-work, and his chair softly cushioned; not whether the schoolhouse in which he had studied were of majestic size, or adorned with columns and porticos; let him have got a good education, and it would be comparatively of little moment how or where he got it. We should not ask what honours he had obtained, but as proofs of his progress. Let him have graduated at the most illustrious university, or have gained, through some mistake, its highest distinctions, and still be essentially deficient in mind or in accomplishment, and that fatal defect would sink into every parent's heart as a heavy and unalleviated disappointment. And are such questions and considerations any less appropriate to the great school of life, whose entire course is an education for virtue, happiness, and heaven? "O God!" exclaims the psalmist, "thou hast taught me from my youth."

Life, I repeat, is a school. The periods of life are its terms; all human conditions are but its forms; all human employments its lessons. Families are the primary departments of this moral education; the

various circles of society, its advanced stages; kingdoms are its universities; the world is but the material structure, built for the administration of its teachings; and it is lifted up in the heavens, and borne through its annual circuits, for no end but this.

Life, I say again, is a school: and all its periods—infancy, youth, manhood, and age, have their appropriate tasks in this school.

With what an early care, and wonderful apparatus, does Providence begin the work of human education! An infant being is cast upon the lap of nature, not to be supported or nourished only, but to be instructed. The world is its school. All elements around are its teachers. Long ere it is placed on the first form before the human master, it has been at school; insomuch that a distinguished statesman has said with equal truth and originality, that he had probably obtained more ideas by the age of five or six years, than he has acquired ever since. And what a wonderful ministration is it! What mighty masters are there for the training of infancy in the powers of surrounding nature! With a finer influence than any human dictation, they penetrate the secret places of that embryo soul, and bring it into life and light. From the soft breathings of Spring, to the rough blasts of Winter, each one pours a blessing upon its favourite child, expanding its frame for action, or fortifying it for endurance. You seek for celebrated schools and distinguished teachers for your children; and it is well. Or you cannot afford to give them these advantages, and you regret it. But consider what you have. Talk we of far-sought and expensive processes of education? That infant eye hath its master in the sun; that infant ear is attuned by the melodies and harmonies of the wide, the boundless creation. The goings on of the heavens and the earth are the courses of childhood's lessons. The shows that are painted on the dome of the sky, and on the uplifted mountains, and on the spreading plains and seas, are its pictured diagrams. Immensity, infinity, eternity, are its teachers. The great universe is the shrine from which oracles—oracles by day and by night—are for ever uttered. Well may it be said, that "of such"—of beings so cared for—"is the kingdom of heaven." Well and fitly is it written of him who comprehended the wondrous birth of humanity, and the gracious and sublime providence of heaven over it, that he took little children in his arms and blessed them.

So begins the education of man in the school of life. It were easy, did the time permit, to pursue it into its successive stages; into the period of youth, when the senses, not yet vitiated, are to be refined into grace and beauty, and the soul is to be developed into reason and virtue; of manhood, when the strength of the ripened passions is to be held under the control of wisdom, and the matured energies of the higher nature are to be directed to the accomplishment of worthy and noble ends; of age, which is to finish with dignity the work begun with ardour; which is to learn patience in weakness, to gather up the fruits of experience into maxims of wisdom, to cause virtuous activity to subside into pious contemplation, and to gaze upon the visions of heaven, through the parting veils of earth.

But in the next place, life presents lessons in its various pursuits and conditions, in its ordinances and events. Riches and poverty, gaieties and sorrows, marriages and funerals, the ties of life bound or broken,

fit and fortunate, or untoward and painful, are all lessons. They are not only appointments, but they are lessons. They are not things which must be, but things which are meant. Events are not blindly and carelessly flung together, in a strange chance-medley; providence is not schooling one man, and screening another from the fiery trial of its lessons; it has no rich favourites nor poor victims; one event happeneth to all; one end, one design, concerneth, urgeth all men.

Hast thou been prosperous? Thou hast been at school; that is all; thou hast been at school. Thou thoughtest, perhaps, that it was a great thing, and that thou wert some great one; but thou art only just a pupil. Thou thoughtest that thou wast master, and hadst nothing to do but to direct and command; but I tell thee that there is a Master above thee; the Master of life; and that He looks not at thy splendid state nor thy many pretensions; not at the aids and appliances of thy learning; but simply at thy learning. As an earthly teacher puts the poor boy and the rich upon the same form, and knows no difference between them but their progress, so it is with thee and thy poor neighbour. *What* then hast thou learnt from thy prosperity? This is the question that I am asking, that all men are asking, when any one has suddenly grown prosperous, or has been a long time so. And I have heard men say in a grave tone, "He cannot bear it!—he has become passionate, proud, self-sufficient and disagreeable." Ah! fallen, disgraced man! even in the world's account. But what, I say again, hast thou learnt from prosperity? Moderation, temperance, candour, modesty, gratitude to God, generosity to man? Well done, good and faithful; thou hast honour with heaven and with men. But what, again I say, hast thou learnt from thy prosperity? Selfishness, self-indulgence, and sin?—to forget or overlook thy less fortunate fellow?—to forget thy God? Then wert thou an unworthy and dishonoured being, though thou hadst been nursed in the bosom of the proudest affluence, or hadst taken thy degrees from the lineage of an hundred noble descents—yes, as truly dishonoured, before the eye of Heaven, though dwelling in splendour and luxury, as if thou wert lying, the victim of beggary and vice, by the hedge, or upon the dunghill. It is the scholar, not the school, at which the most ordinary human equity looks; and let us not think that the equity of heaven will look beneath that lofty mark.

But art thou, to whom I speak, a poor man? Thou, too, art at school. Take care that thou learn, rather than complain. Keep thine integrity, thy candour and kindliness of heart. Beware of envy; beware of bondage; keep thy self-respect. The body's toil is nothing. Beware of the mind's drudgery and degradation. I do not say, be always poor. Better thy condition if thou canst. But be more anxious to better thy soul. Be willing, while thou art poor, patiently to learn the lessons of poverty—fortitude, cheerfulness, contentment, trust in God. The tasks I know are hard; deprivation, toil, the care of children. Thou must wake early; thy children, perhaps, will wake thee; thou canst not put them away from thee to a distant nursery. Fret not thyself because of this; but cheerfully address thyself to thy task; learn patience, calmness, self-command, disinterestedness, love. With these the humblest dwelling may be hallowed, and so made dearer and nobler than the proudest mansion of self-indulgent ease and luxury. But

above all things, if thou art poor, beware that thou lose not thine independence. Cast not thyself, a creature poorer than poor, an indolent, helpless, despised beggar, on the kindness of others. Choose to have God for thy master, rather than man. Escape not from his school, either by dishonesty or almstaking, lest thou fall into that state worse than disgrace, where thou shalt have no respect for thyself. Thou mayest come out of that school; yet beware that thou come not out as a truant, but as a noble scholar. The world itself doth not ask of the candidates for its honours, whether they studied in a palace or a cottage, but what they have acquired, and what they are; and heaven, let us again be assured, will ask no inferior title to its glories and rewards.

Again, the entire social condition of humanity is a school. The ties of society affectingly teach us to love one another. A parent, a child, a husband, or wife, or associate, without love, is nothing but a cold marble image—or rather a machine, an annoyance, a something in the way to vex and pain us. The social relations not only teach love, but demand it. Show me a society, no matter how intelligent, accomplished, and refined, but where love is not,—where there is ambition, jealousy, and distrust—not simplicity, confidence, and kindness; and you show me an unhappy society. All will complain of it. Its punctilious decorum, its polished insincerity, its "threatening urbanity," gives no satisfaction to any of its members. What is the difficulty? What does it want? I answer, it wants love: and if it will not have that, it must suffer, and it ought to suffer.

But the social state also powerfully teaches modesty and meekness. All cannot be great; and nobody may reasonably expect all the world to be engaged with lauding his merits. All cannot be great; and we have happily fallen upon times when none can be distinguished as a few have been in the days of semi-barbarous ignorance. All cannot be great; for then nobody were. The mighty mass of human claims presses down all individual ambition. Were it not so, it were not easy to see where that ambition would stop. Well that it be schooled to reason; and society, without knowing it, is an efficient master for that end. Is any one vexed and sore under neglect? Does he walk through the street unmarked, and say that he deserves to be saluted oftener and with more respect? Does the pang of envy shoot through his heart, when notice is bestowed on others whom he thinks less worthy than he is? Perhaps society *is* unjust to him. What then? What shall he do? What can he do, but learn humility, and patience, and quietness? Perhaps the lesson is roughly and unkindly given. Then must society, through its very imperfection, teach us to be superior to its opinion; and our care must be, not to be cynical and bitter, but gentle, candid, and affectionate still.

Society is doubtless often right in its neglect or its condemnation; but certainly it is sometimes wrong. It seems to be the lot, the chance, the fortune, the accident, of some, to be known, admired, and celebrated. Adulation and praise are poured out at their feet while they live, and upon their tomb when they die. But thousands of others, intrinsically just as interesting, with sentiments that mount as high on earth, and will flourish as fair in heaven, live unpraised and die unknown. Nay, and the very delicacy of some minds forbids their being generally known and appreciated. Tact, facility, readiness, conversation, personal

recommendations, manners, and connexions, help on some; and all these may be wanting to minds that have none the less worth and beauty. Who then would garner up his heart in the opinion of this world? Yet neither let us hate it; but let its imperfection minister to our perfection.

There are also broken ties; and sometimes the holiest ties wear themselves out; like imperfect things, alas! as they are. What, *then*, is to be learnt? I answer, a great lesson. What is to be done? A great duty. To be just; to be true; to cherish a divine candour; to make the best of that which seems not well; to pour not vinegar upon the galling chain, but the oil of gentleness and forbearance. So shall many a wound be healed; and hearts shall be knit together in a better bond than that of hasty impulse—the bond of mutual improvement, strengthening mutual love.

But not to insist more at large upon the disciplinary character of all the conditions of life and society, let us consider, for a moment further, some of its events and ordinances.

Amidst all the gaiety and splendour of life there is a dark spot; over its brightest career there comes a sudden and overshadowing cloud; in the midst of its loud and restless activity there is a deep pause and an awful silence;—what a lesson is death!—death that stops the warm current and the vital breath, and freezes mortal hearts in fear and wonder; death that quells all human power, and quenches all human pride; death, "the dread teacher," the awful admonisher, that tells man of this life's frailty, and of a judgment to come. What a lesson is death! Stern, cold, inexorable, irresistible—the collected might of the world cannot stay it, or ward it off; the breath that is parting from the lips of king, or beggar—the breath that scarcely stirs the hushed air—that little breath—the wealth of empires cannot buy it, or bring it back for a moment. What a lesson is this to proclaim our own frailty, and a power beyond us! It is a fearful lesson; it is never familiar. That which lays its hand upon all, walks through the earth, as a dread mystery. Its mandate falls upon the ear in as fearful accents now, as when it said to the first man, "Thou shalt die! dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." It is a universal lesson. It is read everywhere. Its message comes every year, every day. The years past are filled with its sad and solemn mementos; and could a prophet now stand in the midst of us and announce the future, to more than one of us would he say, "Set thy house in order; for this year thou shalt die." Yes, death is a teacher. I have seen upon the wall of our schoolrooms, the diagram that sets forth some humble theorem; but what a hand-writing is traced by the finger of death upon the walls of every human habitation! And what does it teach? Duty; to act our part well; to fulfil the work assigned us. Other questions, questions of pride, and ambition, and pleasure, may press themselves upon a man's life; but when he is dying—when he is dead, there is but one question—but one question—*has he lived well?* I have seen an old man upon his bier; and I said, "Hath he done the work of many years faithfully? hath he come to his end like a shock of corn fully ripe? Then all is well. There is no evil in death, but what life makes." I have seen one fall amidst life's cares, manly or matronly, and when the end came not like a catastrophe—not as unlooked for—when it came as that

which had been much thought upon and always prepared for; when I saw the head meekly bowed to the visitation, or the eye raised in calm bright hope to heaven, or when the confidence of long intimate friendship knows that it would be raised there though the kind veil of delirium be spread over it—I said, "The work is done, the victory is gained; thanks be to God who giveth that victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I have seen an infant form, sweetly reposing on its last couch, as if death had lost all its terrors, and had become as one of the cherubim of heaven; and I said, "Ah! how many live so, that they will yet wish that they had died with that innocent child!"

Among our Christian ordinances, brethren, there is one that celebrates the victory over death; and there is one that is appropriate to the beginning of life. They are both teachers. Baptismal waters, the emblems of a purity received from God, and to be watched over for God; the consecration unto obedience to the great truths of Christianity —to the doctrine of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost— these teach us, parents, of a charge to be solemnly kept, of duties to be faithfully rendered. The sacramental table—what is it but an altar, set up amidst the realm of death, to the hope of everlasting life? To keep us in mind of him, who conquered death, and brought life and immortality to light, who gave his life a ransom for many, who became a curse for us that we might be redeemed from the curse of sin, who died that we might live for ever—lo! these symbols that are set forth from time to time in the house of God, in the school of Christ! Touching memorials of pain, and sorrow, and patient endurance! Blessed omens, on God's altar, of peace, and forgiveness, and glorious victory!

Such, my friends, are some of the lessons of the school of life. Indulge me in one or two observations on the general character of this school, and I shall have completed my present design.

Life is a finely attempered, and, at the same time, a very trying school.

It is finely attempered; that is, it is carefully adjusted, in all its arrangements and tasks, to man's powers and passions. There is no extravagance in its teachings; nothing is done for the sake of present effect. It excites man, but it does not excite him too much. Indeed, so carefully adjusted are all things to this raging love of excitement, so admirably fitted to hold this passion in check, and to attemper all things to what man can bear, that I cannot help seeing in this feature of life, intrinsic and wonderful evidence of a wise and overruling Order. Men often complain that life is dull, tame, and drudging. But how unwisely were it arranged, if it were all one gala-day of enjoyment or transport! And when men make their own schools of too much excitement, their parties, controversies, associations, and enterprises, how soon do the heavy realities of life fasten upon the chariot-wheels of success when they are ready to take fire, and hold them back to a moderated movement!

Everything, I say, is tempered in the system of things to which we belong. The human passions, and the correspondent powers of impression which man possesses, are all kept within certain limits. I think sometimes of angel forms on earth; of a gracefulness and beauty more than mortal; of a flash or a glance of the eye in the eloquent

man that should rend and inflame a thousand hearts, as lightning does the gnarled oak; but do we not see that for the sensitive frame of man excitement enough is already provided; that the moderated tone of things is all man's ear could bear; the softened and shaded hue enough for his eye; the expressions of countenance and gesture, such as they are, enough for his heart? Nay, how often is the excitement of thought and feeling so great, that, but for the interruptions of humble cares and trifles—the interpositions of a wise providence—the mind and frame would sink under them entirely! It would seem delightful, no doubt, in the pilgrimage of life, to walk through unending galleries of paintings and statues; but human life is not such; it is a school.

It is a trying school. It is a school, very trying to faith, to endurance, and to endeavour. There are mysteries in it. As, to the pupil in a human school, there are lessons of which it does not understand the full intent and bearing, as he is obliged to take some things on trust; so it is in the great school of providence. There are hard lessons to be got in this school. As the pupil is often obliged to bend all his faculties to the task before him, and tears sometimes fall on the page he is studying, so it is in the school of God's providence; there are hard lessons in it.

In short, the whole course of human life is a conflict with difficulties, and, if rightly conducted, a progress in improvement. In both these respects, man holds a position peculiar and distinct from that of the animal races. They are *not* at school. They *never* improve. With them, too, all is facility; while with man, comparatively, all is difficulty. Look at the ant-hill, or the hive of bees. See how the tenant of the one is provided with feet, so constructed that he can run all over his house, outside and inside—no heavy and toilsome steps required to go upward or downward; and how the wings of the other enable him to fly through the air, and achieve the journey of days in an hour. Man's steps compared with these are the steps of toilsome endeavour.

Why is this so? Why is man clothed with this cumbrous mass of flesh? Because it is a more perfect instrument for the mind's culture, though that end is to be wrought out with difficulty. Why are his steps slow and toilsome? Because they are the steps of improvement. Why is he at school? That he may learn. Why is the lesson hard? That he may rise high on the scale of advancement.

Nor is it ever too late for him to learn. This is a distinct consideration; but let me dwell a moment upon it in close. Nor, I say, is it ever too late for man to learn. If any man thinks that his time has gone by, let me take leave to contradict that dangerous assumption. Life is a school; the whole of life. There never comes a time, even amidst the decays of age, when it is fit to lay aside the eagerness of acquisition, or the cheerfulness of endeavour. I protest utterly against the common idea of growing old. I hold that it is an unchristian, a heathen idea. It may befit those who expect to lay down and end their being in the grave, but not those who look upon the grave as the birthplace of immortality. I look for old age as, saving its infirmities, a cheerful and happy time. I think that the affections are often full as warm then as they ever are. Well may the affections of piety be so! They are approaching near to the rest that remaineth; they almost grasp the prize that shall crown them; they are ready to say, with aged Simeon,

"Now let thy servant depart." The battle is almost fought; the victory is near at hand. "Why,"—does any one still ask—"why does the battle press hard to the very end? Why is it ordained for man that he shall walk, all through the course of life, in patience and strife, and sometimes in darkness?" Because from patience is to come perfection. Because from strife is to come triumph. Because from the dark cloud is to come the lightning-flash, that opens the way to eternity!

Christian! hast thou been faithful in the school of life? Art thou faithful to all its lessons? Or hast thou, negligent man! been placed in this great school, only to learn nothing, and hast not cared whether thou didst learn or not? Have the years passed over thee only to witness thy sloth and indifference? Hast thou been zealous to acquire everything but virtue, but the favour of thy God?

But *art* thou faithful, Christian? God help thee to be yet more so in years to come. And remember, for thine encouragement, what is written: "These things saith the first and the last, who was dead and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich); fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

ON THE VALUE OF LIFE.

(PREACHED ON NEW-YEAR'S DAY.)

Job iii. 2, 3: "And Job spake and said, Let the day perish, wherein I was born."

There is a worldly habit of viewing this life, and especially of depreciating its value, against which, in this discourse, I wish to contend. It is the view of life which many of the heathens entertained, and which better became them than those who hold the faith of Christians. "When we reflect," says one of the Grecian sages, "on the destiny that awaits man on earth, we ought to bedew his cradle with our tears." Job's contempt of life, so energetically expressed in the chapter from which my text is taken, was of the same character. We may observe, however, that Job's contempt of life consisted not with the views entertained by the children of the ancient dispensation, and was emphatically rebuked, in common with all his impious complaints, in the sequel of that affecting story. The birth of a child among the Hebrews was hailed with joy, and its birthday was made a festival.

But there are times and seasons, events and influences in life, which awaken in many, sentiments similar to those of Job, and which require to be considered.

The sensibility of youth sometimes takes this direction. It is true, indeed, that to the youthful mind, life for a while is filled with brightness and hope. It is the promised season of activity and enjoyment, of manly independence, of successful business, or of glorious ambition —the season of noble enterprises, and lofty attainments. There is a time, when the youthful fancy is kindling with the anticipations of an ideal world; when it is thinking of friendship and honour of another sort than those which are commonly found in the world; when its promised mansion is the abode of perfect happiness, and its paths, as they stretch into life, seem to it as the paths that shine brighter and brighter for ever.

But over all these glowing expectations there usually comes, sooner or later, a dark eclipse; and it is in the first shock of disappointed hope, before the season of youth is yet fully past, that we are probably exposed to take the most opposite and disconsolate views of life. It is here that we find real, in opposition to fictitious sentimentalism. Before this great shock to early hope comes, the sentimental character is apt to be affectation, and afterwards it is liable to be misanthropy. But now it is a genuine and ingenuous sorrow, at finding life so different from what it

expected. There is a painful and unwelcome effort to give up many cherished habits of thinking about it. The mind encounters the chilling selfishness of the world, and it feels the miserable insufficiency of the world to satisfy its longings after happiness; and life loses many of the bright hues that had gilded its morning season. Indeed, when we take into account the unwonted and multiplied cares of this period, the want of that familiarity and habit which renders the ways and manners of life easy, the difficulties and embarrassments that beset the youthful adventurer, the anxiety about establishing a character, and taking a place in the world, and above all, perhaps, the want of self-discipline; when we take all this into the account, to say nothing of the freshness of disappointment, we may well doubt whether the period of entrance into life is the happiest, though it is commonly looked upon as such. It is not, perhaps, till men proceed farther in the way, that they are prepared, either rightly to estimate, or fully to enjoy it. And it is worthy of notice, in this connection, that those diseases which spring from mental anxiety, are accounted by physicians to be the most prevalent between the ages of twenty and forty.

Manhood arrives at a conclusion unfavourable to life, by a different process. It is not the limited view occasioned by disappointment that brings it to think poorly of life, but it assumes to hold the larger view taken by experience and reflection. It professes to have proved this life, and found it little worth. It has deliberately made up its mind, that life is far more miserable than happy. Its employments, it finds, are tedious, and its schemes are baffled. Its friendships are broken, or its friends are dead. Its pleasures pall, and its honours fade. Its paths are beaten, and familiar, and dull. It has grasped the good of life; and everything grasped loses half of its charm; in the hand of possession everything is shrivelled and sunk to insignificance. Is *this manhood*, then, sad or sentimental? No; farthest possible from it. Sentiment, it holds to be ridiculous; sadness, absurd. It smiles in recklessness. It is merry in despite. It sports away a life not worth a nobler thought, or else it wears away a life not worth a nobler aim, than to get tolerably through it. This is a worldly manhood; and no wonder that its estimate of the value of existence is low and earthly.

Poetry has often ministered to a state of mind, loftier indeed, but of a like complexion. "Life," says the Grecian Pindar, "is the dream of a shadow."

"What," says the melancholy Kirke White—

> "What is this passing life?
> A peevish April day,
> A little sun, a little rain,
> And then night sweeps along the plain,
> And all things fade away."

The melancholy of Byron is of a darker complexion; one might anticipate, indeed, that his misanthropy as well as gloom would repel every reader; and yet a critic has observed that this is the very quality which has caught and held the ear of the sympathizing world. If the world does sympathize with it, it is time that the Christian preacher should raise his voice against it. One may justly feel, indeed, for the sufferings as well as perversions of that extraordinary mind; but its

scepticism and scorn must not be suffered to fling their shadow across the world without rebuke or remonstrance. Its sufferings, indeed, are a striking proof, which the Christian teacher might well adduce, of the tendency of earthly passion and unbelief to darken all the way of human life.

The pulpit, also, I must allow, has fallen under the charge of leaning to the dark side of things. It may be said, perhaps, that if its instructions are to have any bias, it is expedient that it should lean to the dark side. But error or mistake is not to be vindicated by its expediency, or its power to affect the mind. And its expediency, in fact, if not its power, in this case, is to be doubted. Men of reflection and discernment are, and ought to be, dissatisfied with disproportionate and extravagant statements, made with a view to support the claims of an ascetic piety or a cynical morality. And one mistake, the preacher may find is, to the hearer, an intrenchment, strong against an hundred of his arguments.

It is true, also, that religious men in general have been accustomed to talk gloomily of the present state. I do not mean such religious men as the wise and holy saints of old. Let the rejoicing apostles, rejoicing in the midst of the greatest calamities; let the mild cheerfulness of their Master, stand as monuments against the perversions of later times. It has strangely come to be thought a mark of great piety towards God, to disparage, if not to despise, the state which he has ordained for us; and the claims of this world have been absurdly set up, not in comparison only, but in competition, with the claims of another; as if both were not parts of one system; as if a man could not make the best of this world and of another at the same time; as if we should learn to think better of other works and dispensations of God, by thinking meanly of these. Jesus and his apostles did not teach us to contemn our present condition. They taught that every creature and every appointment of God is good, and to be received thankfully. They did not look upon life as so much time lost; they did not regard its employments as trifles unworthy of immortal beings; they did not tell their followers to fold their arms as if in disdain of their state and species; but it is evident that they looked soberly and cheerfully upon the world, as the theatre of worthy action, of exalted usefulness, and of rational and innocent enjoyment.

But I am considering the disparaging views of life; and against these views, whether sentimental, worldly, poetical, or religious, I must contend. I firmly maintain, that, with all its evils, life is a blessing. There is a presumptive argument for this of the greatest strength. To deny that life is a blessing, is to destroy the very basis of all religion, natural, and revealed; and the argument I am engaged upon, therefore, well deserves attention: for the very foundation of all religion is laid in the belief that God is good. But if life is an evil and a curse, there can be no such belief rationally entertained. The Scriptures do not prove, nor pretend to prove, that God is good. They assume that truth as already certain. But what makes it certain? Where does, or can the proof come from? Obviously from this world, and nowhere else. Nowhere else can our knowledge extend, to gather proof. Nay more, I say, the proof must come from this *life* and from nothing else. For it avails not—if life itself is doomed to be unhappy—it avails not

to the argument to say that this world is fair and glorious. It avails not to say that this outward frame of things, this vast habitation of life, is beautiful. The architecture of an infirmary may be beautiful, and the towers of a prison may be built on the grandest scale of architectural magnificence; but it would little avail the victims of sickness or of bondage. And so if this life is a doomed life—doomed by its very condition to sufferings far greater than its pleasures; if it is a curse, and not a blessing; if sighs and groans must rise from it more frequent and loud than voices of joy and gladness, it will avail but little that heaven spreads its majestic dome over our misery; that the mountain walls which echo our griefs are clothed with grandeur and might; or that the earth which bears the burthen of our woes is paved with granite and marble, or covered with verdure and beauty.

Let him, then, who says that this life is not a blessing; let him who levels his satire at humanity and human existence as mean and contemptible; let him who with the philosophic pride of a Voltaire or a Gibbon looks upon this world as the habitation of a miserable race, fit only for mockery and scorn, or who with the religious melancholy of Thomas a Kempis or of Brainard, overshadows this world with the gloom of his imagination till it seems a dungeon or a prison, which has no blessing to offer but escape from it,—let all such consider that they are extinguishing the primal light of faith, and hope, and happiness. If life is not a blessing, if the world is not a goodly world, if residence in it is not a favoured condition, then religion has lost its basis, truth its foundation, in the goodness of God; then it matters not what else is true or not true; speculation is vain and faith is vain; and all that pertains to man's highest being is whelmed in the ruins of misanthropy, melancholy, and despair.

The argument in this view is well deserving of attention. Considered as a merely speculative point, it is nevertheless one on which everything hangs. And this indeed is the consideration which I have been stating —that the whole superstructure of religious truth is based upon this foundation truth, that life is a blessing.

And that this is not a mere assumption, I infer in the next place from experience. And there are two points in this experience to be noticed. First, the love of life proves that it is a blessing. If it is not, why are men so attached to it? Will it be said, that it is "the dread of something after death" that binds man to life? But make the case a fair one for the argument: say, for instance, that the souls of men sleep, after death, till the resurrection; and would not almost every man rather live on, during the intermediate space, than sink to that temporary oblivion?

But to refer, in the next place, to a consideration still plainer and less embarrassed; why are we so attached to our local situation in life, to our home, to the spot that gave us birth, or to any place, no matter how unsightly or barren,—though it were the rudest mountain or rock,—on which the history of years has been written? Will it be said that it is habit which endears our residence? But what kind of habit? A habit of being miserable? The question needs no reply. Will you refer me to the pathetic story of the aged prisoner of the Bastile, who, on being released and coming forth into the world, desired to return to his prison; and argue from this, that a man may learn to love even the

glooms of a dungeon, provided they become habitual? But why did that aged prisoner desire to return? It was not because he loved the cold shadow of his prison-walls, but it was, as the story informs us, because his friends were gone from the earth; it was because no living creature knew him, that the world was darker to him than the gloomy dungeons of the Bastile. It shows how dear are the ties of kindred and society. It shows how strong and how sweet are those social affections which we never appreciate till we are cut off from their joys; which glide from heart to heart as the sunbeams pass unobserved in the daylight of prosperity; but if a ray of that social kindness visits the prison of our sickness and affliction, it comes to us like a beam of heaven. And though we had worn out a life in confinement, we go back again to meet that beam of heaven, the smile of society; and if we do not find it, we had rather return to the silent walls that know us, than to dwell in a world that knows us not.

But after all, and as a matter of fact, how many miseries, it may be said, are bound up with this life, too deeply interwoven with it, and too keenly felt, to allow it to be called a favoured and happy life! Besides evils of common occurrence and account, besides sickness and pain and poverty, besides disappointment and bereavement and sorrow, how many evils are there that are not embraced in the common estimate; evils that are secret and silent, that dwell deep in the recesses of life, that do not come forth to draw the public gaze or to awaken the public sympathy! How many are there who never tell their grief—how many who spread a fair and smiling exterior over an aching heart!"

Alas! it is but too easy to make out a strong statement: and yet the very strength of the statement, the strong feeling, at least, with which it is made, disproves the cynical argument. The truth is, and it is obvious, that misery makes a greater impression upon us than happiness. Why? Because misery is not the habit of our minds. It is a strange and unwonted guest, and we are more conscious of its presence. Happiness—not to speak now of any very high quality or entirely satisfying state of mind, but only of a general easiness, cheerfulness, and comfort—happiness, I say, dwells with us, and we forget it: it does not excite us; it does not disturb the order and course of our thoughts. All our impressions about affliction, on the other hand, show that it is more rare, and at the same time more regarded. It creates a sensation and stir in the world. When death enters among us, it spreads a groan through our dwellings; it clothes them with unwonted and sympathizing grief. Thus, afflictions are like epochs in life. We remember them as we do the storm and earthquake, because they are out of the common course of things. They stand like disastrous events in a table of chronology, recorded because they are extraordinary; and with whole periods of prosperity between. Thus do we mark out and signalize the times of calamity; but how many happy days pass—unnoted periods in the table of life's chronology—unrecorded either in the book of memory or in the scanty annals of our thanksgiving? How many happy months are swept beneath the silent wing of time, and leave no name nor record in our hearts! How little are we *able*, much as we may be disposed, to call up from the dim remembrances of the year that is just ended, the peaceful moments, the easy sensations, the

bright thoughts, the movements of kind and blessed affections, in which life has flowed on, bearing us almost unconsciously upon its bosom because it has borne us calmly and gently! Sweet moments of quietness and affection! glad hours of joy and hope! days, ye many days begun and ended in health and happiness! times and seasons of heaven's gracious beneficence! stand before us yet again, in the light of memory, and command us to be thankful, and to prize as we ought the gift of life.

But, my brethren, I must not content myself with a bare defence of life as against a sceptical or cynical spirit, or as against the errors and mistakes of religion. I must not content myself with a view of the palpable and acknowledged blessings of life. Life is more than what is palpable, or often acknowledged. I contend against the cynical and the superstitious disparagement of life, not alone as wrong and as fatal indeed to all religion; but I contend against it as fatal to the highest improvement of life. I say that life is not only good, but that it was made to be glorious. Ay, and it has been glorious in the experience of millions. The glory of all human virtue arrays it. The glory of sanctity and beneficence and heroism is upon it. The crown of a thousand martyrdoms is upon its brow.

Through this visible and sometimes darkened life, it was intended that the brightness of the soul should shine, and that it should shine through all its surrounding cares and labours. The humblest life which any one of us leads may be what has been expressively denominated "the life of God in the soul." It may hold a felt connexion with its infinite source. It may derive an inexpressible sublimity from that connexion. Yes, my brethren, there may be something of God in our daily life; something of might in this frail inner man; something of immortality in this momentary and transient being.

This mind—I survey it with awe, with wonder—encompassed with flesh, fenced around with barriers of sense; yet it breaks every bound, and stretches away, on every side, into infinity. It is not upon the line only of its eternal duration that it goes forth—forth from this day of its new annual period, through the periods of immortality—but its thoughts, like diverging rays, spread themselves abroad and far, far into the boundless, the immeasurable, the infinite. And these diverging rays may be like cords to lift it up to heaven. What a glorious thing, then, is this life! To know its wonderful Author—to bring down wisdom from the eternal stars—to bear upward its homage, its gratitude, its love, to the Ruler of all worlds—what glory in the created universe is there surpassing this? "Thou crownest it—it is written—thou crownest it with loving-kindness and tender mercy; thou crownest it with glory and honour; thou hast made it a little lower than the angelic life."

Am I asked, then, what is life? I say, in answer, that it is good. God saw and pronounced that it was good when he made it. Man feels that it is good when he preserves it. It is good in the unnumbered sources of happiness around it. It is good in the ten thousand buoyant and happy affections within it. It is good in its connexion with infinite goodness, and in its hope of infinite glory beyond it. True, our life is frail in its earthly state, and it is often bowed down with earthly burthens; but still it endures, and revives, and flourishes; still it is

redeemed from destruction, and crowned with lovingkindness and tender mercy. Frail, too, and yet strong is it, in its heavenly nature. The immortal is clothed with mortality; and the incorruptible with corruption. It is like an instrument formed for heavenly melody; whose materials were taken, indeed, from the mouldering and unsightly forest: but lo! the hand of the artificer has been upon it; it is curiously wrought; it is fearfully and wonderfully made; it is fashioned for every tone of gladness and triumph. It may be relaxed, but it can be strung again. It may send forth a mournful strain; but it is formed also for the music of heavenly joy. Even its sadness is "pleasing and mournful to the soul." Even suffering is hallowed and dear. Life has that value, that even misery cannot destroy it. It neutralizes grief, and makes it a source of deep and sacred interest. Ah! holy hours of suffering and sorrow—hours of communion with the great and triumphant Sufferer—who, that has passed through your silent moments of prayer, and resignation, and trust, would give you up for all the brightness of prosperity?

Am I still asked what is life? I answer, that it is a great and sublime gift. Those felicitations with which this renewed season of it is welcomed, are but a fit tribute to its value, and to the gladness which belongs to it. "Happy," says the general voice, "happy New Year!" to all who live to see it. Life is felt to be a great and gracious boon, by all who enjoy its light; and this is not too much felt. It is the wonderful creation of God; and it cannot be too much admired. It is light sprung from void darkness; it is power waked from inertness and impotence; it is being created from nothing; well may the contrast enkindle wonder and delight. It is a stream from the infinite and overflowing goodness; and from its first gushing forth, to its mingling with the ocean of eternity, that goodness attends it. Yes; life, despite of all that cynics or sentimentalists say, is a great and glorious gift.—There is gladness in its infant voices. There is joy in the buoyant step of its youth. There is deep satisfaction in its strong maturity. There is holy peace in its quiet age. There is good for the good; there is virtue for the faithful; there is victory for the valiant. There is spirituality for the spiritual; and there is, even in this humble life, an infinity for the boundless in desire. There are blessings upon its birth: there is hope in its death; and there is—to consummate all—there is eternity in its prospect.

As I have discoursed upon this theme, it is possible that some may have thought that it has nothing to do with religion; that it is a subject merely for fine sentiments, and for nothing more. Let me tell such a thinker, that this subject has not only much to do with religion every way, but that it furnishes, in fact, a test of our religion. To the low-minded, debased, and sensual, this life must, doubtless, be something very poor, indifferent, and common-place; it must be a beaten path, a dull scene, shut in on every side by the earthly, palpable, and gross. But break down the barriers of sense—open the windows of faith—fling wide the gates that darken the sensual world, and let the light of heaven pour in upon it—and then what is this life? How changed is it!—how new!—a new heavens, indeed, and a new earth. Yes, this earth, which binds one man in chains, is to the other the

starting-place, the goal of immortality. This earth, which buries one man in the rubbish of dull cares and wearying vanities, is to the other the lofty mount of meditation, where heaven and infinity and eternity are spread before him and around him. Yes, my friend, the life thou leadest—the life thou thinkest of—is the interpreter of thine inward being. Such as life is to thee, such thou art. If it is low and mean and base—if it is a mere money-getting or pleasure-seeking or honour-craving life—so art thou. Be thou lofty-minded, pure, and holy—and life shall be to thee the beginning of heaven—the threshold of immortality.

LIFE'S CONSOLATION IN VIEW OF DEATH.

John xi. 25: "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life."

These words, my brethren, so stupendous in their import, so majestic in their tone—when and where were they uttered? They were uttered in a world of the dying; in a world which is the tomb of all past generations; in a world from whose dreary caverns, from whose dark catacombs, and alike from whose proud mausoleums and towering pyramids, no word ever issued that spake of anything but death. They were uttered in an hour when bereavement, dimmed with tears, and fainting with sorrow, was sighing for help more than human.

It was at Bethany. You remember the affecting story of Mary, and Martha her sister, and of Lazarus their brother. So simply and truly is it told, that it seems as if it were the relation of what had taken place in any village around us. "Now a certain man named Lazarus, of Bethany, was sick." How does such an event, when it becomes sufficiently marked with peril to attract attention, spread anxiety and apprehension through a whole neighbourhood. Life pauses, and is suspended on the result. "Lazarus was sick." What fears, watchings, and agonies of solicitude, hover around the sick man's couch, none but the inmates of his dwelling can know. It was in such an emergency that Mary and Martha, fearful and troubled, sent a message to their chief comforter and friend, saying, "Behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." Jesus, for reasons perhaps beyond our knowledge, does not immediately answer the call of distress. He remains two days in the same place. Then the dreaded event had taken place; all was over; and he calmly says to his disciples, "Our friend, Lazarus, sleepeth." So does he contemplate death; not as a dread catastrophe, but as a quiet sleep, a sacred repose, succeeding the weary and troubled day of life. Beautifully says our great dramatist,

"After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well."

But so does it not appear to the bereaved and sorrowing sisters. They are plunged into the deepest distress. It is a time of mourning in that still and desolate house at Bethany. The dead is buried; but grief lives, and the hours pass in silent agony. The sympathizing neighbours from the village are still there, and many friends from Jerusalem are with the afflicted sisters, to comfort them concerning their brother.

At length, the Master approaches. Martha, evermore alert and attentive to what is passing, first hearing of it, goes forth to meet him.

Soon however she returns, and says to Mary, her sister, secretly—gives her a private intimation—how much passes in the dumb show, in whispers, where deep grief is!—she says, in a low tone, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee. And as soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came unto him." The language of both when they meet him is the same—turns upon the same point—"Lord, if thou hadst been here, our brother had not died." What natural and living truth is there, in this simple trial of feeling! How natural is it for the bereaved to think that if this or that had been done—if this or that physician had been called—if some other course had been adopted, or some other plan or clime had favoured, the blow might have been averted. The thoughts all shrink from the awful certainty—revert to the possibility of its having been avoided; and catch at all possible suppositions to find relief. But the awful certainty nevertheless overwhelmed the mourning sisters; "the end had come; their brother was dead—was dead!—no help now—no change to come over that still sleep"—so mourned they; and Jesus, beholding their distress, groaned in spirit and was troubled. "Jesus wept." He was not one who, with cold philosophy, or misplaced rapture in his countenance, looked on bereavement and agony—looked on death. He was not one who forbade tears and sorrow. He was not one who approached the grave with an air of triumph, though he had gained a victory over it; but it is written, that "again groaning within himself, he came to the grave." No: humanity shudders, and trembles, and groans when it comes there, and may not, by any true religion, be denied these testimonies to its frailty.

But still there were words of soothing and comfort uttered by our Saviour on this occasion; and let us now turn to them and consider their import: "Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." She had probably heard the doctrine of a future life from himself; but alas! that life seems far off; dim shadows spread themselves over the everlasting fields; they seem unreal to a person of Martha's turn of mind; she wants her brother again as he was but now, by her side; she entertains some hope that Jesus will restore him; she says, "even now, I know that whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." Jesus does not reply to this suggestion; he does not tell her whether her brother shall immediately come back to her; but utters himself in a more general and grander truth. "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die; believest thou this?" As if he had said, be not too curious nor anxious in your thoughts, but confide, Martha, in me. You believe in a future resurrection, or renewal of life; you hope for the immediate resurrection of your brother; but be satisfied with this,—"I am the resurrection:" all that resurrection, renewal of life, heavenly happiness means, is embodied, consummated, fulfilled in me. Nay, it is not some future return to being of which I speak; he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Already he hath begun to live immortally. Death is for the body; but for

that soul, no death. Its affections are in their very nature immortal; and have in them the very elements of undecaying happiness.

Let us attend a moment to the two parts of this instruction; what our Saviour uttered as already the belief of Martha, and what he added in the emphatic declaration, "I am the resurrection and the life."

"Thy brother shall live again;" thy brother. Not some undefined spirituality, not some new and strange being shall go forth beyond the mortal bourne; but life—life in its character, its affections, its spiritual identity, such as it is here; thy *brother* shall rise again. He is not lost to thee; he shall not be so spiritually changed as to be for ever lost to thee. On some other shore—as if he had only gone to another hemisphere, instead of another world—on some other shore thou shalt find him again—find thy brother. Thus much must have been taught, or there had been no pertinency, no comfort in the teaching. To have only said that in the eternal revolutions and metamorphoses of being—life, existence, should in some sense be continued, or that all souls should be re-absorbed into the Parent Soul, would have been nothing to this mourning sister. Without conscious identity, indeed, without continued existence, a future life has no intelligible meaning; and certainly without it, there could be no such thing as reward or retribution. And since the social element is an essential part of our nature, that element must be found in a nature which is the same: and that being so, to suppose that friends should meet and commune together, without recognition, is as absurd as it would be unsatisfactory. Most clearly—to confine ourselves to the case before us—such a promise of future existence—that is, of a vague, indefinite, unremembering existence—would be no comfort to sorrowing friendship. To individual expectation it would be something, but to bereaved affection, nothing. It is to such sorrow—one of the bitterest in this world—that of a sister left alone in the world—that Jesus speaks; and he says, "Thy brother shall live again."

"Thy brother shall live again." What words are these to be uttered—amidst the wrecks of time, the memorials of buried nations, the earth-mounds swelling far and wide above the silent dust of all that has ever lived and breathed in the visible creation! Whence comes such stupendous, such amazing words as these? From beyond the regions of all visible life they come. From the dark earth beneath us, no voice issues; from the shining walls of heaven, no angel forms beckon us; Silence, dust, death are here; no more: the earth entombs us, the heavens crush us, till those words come to us, heaven-sent, from the great realm of invisible life. O blessed revelation! Life there is for us, somewhere—I ask not where. I can wait God's time for that. Blessed fields there are somewhere in the great embosoming universe of God, that stretch onward and onward for ever, and the happy walk there. There shall we find our lost ones, and be with them evermore. "Father," said our Saviour, when he was about to depart, "I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am." Shall that prayer be answered? Then shall there be a glorious fellowship of good men with Jesus and with one another. Are we not sometimes, when we think of this, like Paul, "in a strait between two"—between the claims of friendship on earth, and of friendship in heaven,—and ready to say, "For us it is better to depart, and be with Christ"? Are we

not ready to say—as the disciples did of Lazarus—when our beloved ones are gone from us, "Let us go and die with them"?

And then in addition to this inexpressible comfort and hope, what is it that our Saviour so emphatically says to Martha? "I *am* the resurrection and the life." Something *in addition*, we may well suppose it must be. And I understand it to be this. He that believeth on me, that is, receiveth me, hath the spirit, the spiritual life that is in me—the same love of God—the same trust in God—is already living an immortal life. He shall never die. That in him which partakes of my inward life, shall never die. It is essentially immortal, and immortally blessed; and no dark eclipse shall come over it, between death and the resurrection, to bury it in the gloom of utter unconsciousness, or to cause it to wander like a shadow in the dim realms of an intermediate state. "I *am* the resurrection. Thy brother, who hath part in me, lives *now*, as truly as I live." As he says in another place, "I am the bread of life; he that eateth me, even he shall live through me;" so he says, "I am the resurrection and the life; and to him that is partner and partaker with me, belongeth not death, but only resurrection, continued life, life everlasting."

Let us now proceed to consider one or two further grounds for consolation that are suggested by this teaching of our Saviour.

That which he especially proposes to his bereaved friends at Bethany, is faith in him. It was a faith in him as the Saviour of the world, as one who was commissioned to bring life and immortality clearly to light, as one who through his own death and resurrection should open the way to heaven. But we should not do justice to this sentiment of faith, if we did not regard it as something more than any mere view of him as Saviour; if we did not regard it as the most intimate participation of the spiritual life that was in him. That participation embraces, doubtless, general purity of heart and life, an humble resignation to God's will, a thoughtful consideration of the wise purposes and necessary uses of affliction; but especially it embraces as the sum and source of all, the love of God. Faith in Christ is nothing more, emphatically, than it is the love of God, his Father. Upon nothing does he more earnestly insist, and upon this he especially insists as the pledge and the test of fidelity to him.

To this, then, let me particularly direct your attention as the most essential part of that faith which is to comfort us.

It is the love of God only that can produce a just sense of his love to us. It is only a deep and true sense of his love to us, that can assuage the wounds of our affliction. This results from the very nature of things. It is not a technical dogma, but a living and practical truth. It is not a truth, merely, for certain persons called Christians, who are supposed to understand this language; but it is a truth for all men. We suffer under the government of God. It is his will that has appointed to us change, trial, bereavement, sorrow, death. The dispensation therefore, will be coloured to us throughout—it will be darkened or brightened all over, by our views of its great Ordainer. Ah! it is a doubt *here*—it is some distrust or difficulty, or want of vital faith on this point, that often adds the bitterest sting to human affliction. When all is well with us, we can say that God is good, and think that we have some love to him; but when the blow of calamity or of death

falls upon our dearest possession—strikes down innocent childhood or lovely youth, or the needed maturity of all human virtue, or source of all earthly help and comfort—strikes from our side that which we could least of all spare—oh! it seems to us a cruel, cruel blow: and we say, perhaps, in our distracted thoughts, "*Is* God good, to inflict it upon us? He—oh! he could have saved, and he did not; he would not. Why would he not?—Does he love us—and yet afflict us so?—yet crush us, break us down, and blight all our hopes? Is this a loving dispensation?"

My friends, there is but one remedy for all this—the love—the love—the true, pure, childlike love of God: such love and trust as Jesus felt—even as he, the smitten, afflicted, cast down, betrayed, crucified; who was urged, in the extremity of his sorrow, to say, "Father, if it be possible remove this cup from me;" yet immediately added, "Father, not my will, but thine be done." This is our example. This is our only salvation. Nothing but this love of God can yield us comfort. If there is no ground for this, then there is no place for consolation in the universe. There may be enduring, there may be forgetting; but there can be no consolation. If there is ground for this love and trust, who in the day of trouble will not pray God to breathe it into his broken heart?

I have said that doubt, distrust, want of faith, is our difficulty. But I do not mean that we seriously and deliberately doubt the goodness of God. How *can* we doubt. How *can* the Infinite Being be anything but good? What motive, what reason, what possibility, I had almost said, can there be to Infinite power, Infinite sufficiency, to be anything but good? How *can* we—except it be in some momentary paroxysm of grief—how, I say, *can* we doubt? How doubt—beneath these shining heavens—amidst the riches, the plenitude, the brightness, and beauty, of the whole creation—with capacities of thought, of improvement, of happiness in ourselves that almost transcend expression—nay, and with sorrows too, that proclaim the loss of objects so inexpressibly dear? Whence, but from love in God, could have come a love in us so intense, so transporting, so full of joy and blessedness—nay, and so full too of pain and anguish? No! such a love in me assures me that it had its *origin* in love. Could the Being who made me intelligent, have been himself without intelligence? Nor could the Being want love, who has made me so to love—so to sorrow for what I love. By my very sorrows, then, I know that God loves me—I say not whether with approbation, but with an infinite kindness, an infinite pity. What *I* need is, but to *feel* it—to pray for that feeling—to meditate upon all that should bring that feeling into my heart—to take refuge amidst my sorrows, in the assurance that God loves me, that he does not willingly grieve or afflict me, that he chastens me for my profiting, that he could not show so much love for me, by leaving me unchastened, untried, undisciplined. "We have had fathers of our flesh who chastened us—put us to tasks, trials, griefs—and we gave them reverence—felt, amidst all, that they were good. Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of our spirits, and live?" Great is the faith that must save us. It is a faith in the Infinite,—a faith in the Infinite love of God!

From this faith arises another ground of consolation. It is, not only

that all is well; but that in the great order of things, *that* which particularly concerns us—enters into our peculiar suffering—is well. Our case, perhaps, is bereavement—heavy and sorrowful bereavement. Is it a messenger of wrath? Is any one of its circumstances, of its peculiarities—so poignant and piercing to us—an indication of divine anger? Awful thought! Unmitigable calamity, if it were so! But no; it is appointed in love. Can God do anything for anger's sake? To me, it were not God, of whom this could be said. Let it be, that a *bad* man has died. Has God made him die, because he hated him? I believe it not. If he has lost his being, I believe that it is well that he has lost it. If he has gone to retribution, I believe it is well that he has gone to that retribution,—that nothing could be better for him, being what it is. If *I* were that unhappy being, I would say, "Let me be in the hands of the infinitely good God, rather than anywhere else." But if it is a good being that has gone from me, an innocent child, or one clothed with every lovely virtue—one whom Jesus loved as he loved the dear brother in Bethany—to what joys unspeakable has that being gone! In the bosom of God—in the bosom of infinite love—all with him is well. Could that departed one speak to us—that lovely and loving one, invested with the radiance and surrounded with the bliss of some heavenly land—would not the language be, "Mourn not for me, or mourn not as having no hope. Dishonour not the good and blessed One, my Father and your Father, by any distrust or doubt. Mourn for me—remember me, as I too remember you—long for you—but mourn with humble patience and calm sustaining faith."

How is it with us, my brethren, in this world, and what, in contemplation of death, would we say to those that we shall leave behind us? "Grieve not for me," would not one say?—or, "grieve not too much when I am gone. I cannot bear that you should suffer that awful agony, that desolating sorrow, that is often seen in the house of mourning. Remembered I would be—oh! let me have a memorial in some living, affectionate hearts!—I would never be forgotten—I would never have it felt that the tie with me is broken:—but let the memory of me be calm, patient, sacred, gently sorrowing, if need be, but yet ever partaking of the blessedness of that love which death cannot quench. Let not my name gather about it an awfulness, or a sacredness, such that it may not be uttered in the places where I have lived; or if, in the sanctuary where it is kept, there is a delicacy that forbids the easy utterance of it, still let it not be invested with gloom and sadness. Think of me when I am gone, as one who thought much on death; who had thoughts of it, more and greater than he could, in the ordinary goings on of life, find fit occasion to utter. If you could wish that I had said more to you, on this and many other themes, yet give the confidence, that you must ask for that secret world within us all,—that world of a thousand tender thoughts and feelings, for which language has no expression. Think of me as still possessing those thoughts and feelings—as still the same to you—as one that loves you still; for death shall not destroy in us that image of Christ, a pure and holy love. If I retain my consciousness, I must still think of you—with more than all the love I ever felt; it cannot be otherwise. And if I am to sleep till the resurrection, though my hope is far different—believing in Jesus, my hope is that I am already of the resurrection; yet if it be

so, that God has ordained that pause in my existence, it is surely for a wise purpose—it is doubtless best for me—and to the ever good and blessed will of God, I calmly and humbly submit myself: to that ever gracious will, I pray you to be patiently and cheerfully resigned. How much better is it than your will or mine! What boundless good may we not expect from an Infinite Will, prompted by an Infinite Love! Lift up your lowly thoughts to this: lift them up to the heavenly regions, to the boundless universe, to the all-embracing eternity; and in these contemplations lose the too keen sense of this breathing hour of time, of this world of dust and shadows—and of brightness and beauty too: for all is good; all in earth and in heaven, in time and eternity, is good."

Thus, I conceive, might a wise and good man, about to depart from this life, speak to those whom he was to leave behind him. And thus might those who have died in infant innocence—thus might angel-children, speak from some brighter sphere. And, if it were wisdom thus to speak, then let that wisdom sink into our hearts, and bring there its consolation. Perfect relief from suffering it cannot bring; sorrow we may, we must; many and bitter pains must we bear in this mortal lot; Jesus wept over such pains, and we may weep over them; but let us be wise—let us be trustful—let the love of God fill our hearts—let the heavenly consolation help us all that it can. It can help us much. It is not mere breath of words, to say that God is good, that all is right, all is well; all that concerns us is the care of Infinite Love. It is not a mere religious common-place to say, that submission, trust, love, can help us. More than eye ever saw, or the ear ever heard, or the worldly heart ever conceived, can a deep, humble, childlike, loving piety, bring help and comfort in the hours of mortal sorrow and bitterness. Believest thou this? This was our Saviour's question to Martha, in her distress. "He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?" This humble, this heart-believing, my friends, is what we need—must have—must seek. The breathing of the life of Jesus in us—the bright cloud around us, in which he walked—this can comfort us beyond all that we know—all that we imagine. May we find that comfort! Forlorn, forsaken—or deprived, destitute—or bereaved, broken-hearted—whatever be our strait or sorrow—may we find that comfort!

My brethren, I have been communing, now, with affliction. It is a holy and delicate office; and I have been afraid, when speaking with all the earnestness I felt, lest I should not speak with all the delicacy I ought; lest I should only add to grief, by touching its wound. But I felt that I was coming to meet sorrow—I know that I often come to meet it here—it has of late occupied much of my mind—and I could not refrain from offering my humble aid for its relief.

I reflected, too, that I was coming this morning to this sacred table* —this altar, reared for the comfort of all believing souls—reared by dying hands, to the resurrection—to the hope of everlasting life. It was the same night in which he was betrayed—it was when *he* was about to die, that Jesus set forth, in the form of a feast, this solemn

* Preached before the Communion.

and cheering memorial of himself; and uttered many soothing and consoling words to his disciples. He did not build a tomb, by which to be remembered, but he appointed a feast of remembrance. He did not tell his disciples to put on sackcloth, but to clothe themselves with the recollections of him, as with a robe of immortality. Death, indeed, was a dread to him—and he shrunk from it. It was a grief to his disciples, and he recognised it as such, and so dealt with it. But he showed to them a trust in God, a loving submission to the Father, that could stay the soul. He spoke of a victory over death. He assured them that man's last enemy was conquered. Here, then, amidst these memorials of death, let us meditate upon the life everlasting. Let us carry our thoughts to that world where Christ is, and where he prayed that all who love him might be with him—where, we believe, they are with him. Let our faith rise so high—God grant it!—that we can say, "Oh! grave, where is thy victory? Oh! death, where is thy sting? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ, our Lord!"

THE PROBLEM OF LIFE, RESOLVED IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

John i. 4: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men."

The words, life and light, are constantly used by the apostle John, after a manner long familiar in the Hebrew writings, for spiritual happiness, and spiritual truth. The inmost and truest life of man—the life of his life, is spiritual life—is, in other words, purity, love, goodness; and this inward purity, love, goodness, is the very light of life—that which brightens, blesses, guides it.

I have little respect for the ingenuity that is always striving to work out from the simple language of Scripture, fanciful and far-fetched meanings; but it would seem, in the passage before us, as if John intended to state one of the deepest truths in the very frame of our being; and that is, *that goodness is the fountain of wisdom.*

Give me your patience a moment, and I will attempt to explain this proposition. In it, was life—that is, in this manifested and all-creating energy, this outflowing of the power of God, was a divine and infinite love and joy; and this life was the light of men. That is to say—love first, then light. Light does not create love; but love creates light. The good heart only can understand the good teaching. The doctrine of truth that guides a man, comes from the divinity of goodness that inspires him. But, it will be said, does not a man become holy or good, *in view* of truth? I answer, that he cannot *view* the truth, but through the medium of love. It is the loving view only that is effective; that is any view at all. I must desire you to observe that I am speaking now of the primary convictions of a man, and not of the secondary influences that operate upon him. Light may *strengthen* love; a knowledge of the works and ways of God may have this effect, and it is properly presented for this purpose. But light cannot *originate* love. If love were not implanted in man's original and inmost being; if there were not placed there the moral or spiritual feeling that loves while it perceives goodness, all the speculative light in the universe would leave man's nature still and for ever cold and dead as a stone. In short, loveliness is a quality which nothing but love can perceive. God cannot be known in his highest, that is, in his spiritual and holy nature, except by those who love him.

Now of this life and light, as we are immediately afterwards taught, Jesus Christ—not as a teacher merely, but as a being—is to us the great and appointed source. And therefore when Thomas says, "How can we know the way of which thou speakest?" Jesus answers, "*I*

am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me." That is, no man can truly come to God, but in that spirit of filial love, of which I am the example.

In our humanity there is a problem. In Christ only is it perfectly solved. The speculative solution of that problem is philosophy. The practical solution is a good life; and the only perfect solution is the life of Christ. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

In him, I say, was solved the problem of life. What is that problem? What are the questions which it presents? They are these. Is there anything that can be achieved in life, in which our nature can find full satisfaction and sufficiency? And if there be any such thing—any such end of life—then is there any adaptation of things to that end? Are there any means or helps provided in life for its attainment? Now the end must be the highest condition of our highest nature; and that end we say is virtue, sanctity, blessedness. And the helps or means are found in the whole discipline of life. But the end was perfectly accomplished in Christ, and it was accomplished through the very means which are appointed to us. He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin; and "he was made thus perfect through sufferings."

Our Saviour evidently regarded himself as sustaining this relation to human life; the enlightener of its darkness, the interpreter of its mystery, the solver of its problem. "I am the light of the world," he says, "he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." And again: "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness." It was not for abstract teaching to men that he came, but for actual guidance in their daily abodes. It was not to deliver doctrines alone, nor to utter nor echo back the intuitive convictions of our own minds, but to live a life and to die a death; and so to live and to die, as to cast light upon the dark paths in which we walk.

I need not say that there is darkness in the paths of men; that they stumble at difficulties, are ensnared by temptations, are perplexed by doubts; that they are anxious, and troubled, and fearful; that pain, and affliction, and sorrow, often gather around the steps of their earthly pilgrimage. All this is written upon the very tablet of the human heart. And I *do* not say that all this is to be erased; but only that it is to be seen and read in a new light. I *do* not say that ills, and trials, and sufferings, are to be removed from life, but only that over this scene of mortal trouble a new heaven is to be spread, and that the light of that heaven is Christ the sun of righteousness.

To human pride this may be a hard saying; to human philosophy, learning, and grandeur, it may be a hard saying: but still it is true, that the simple life of Christ, studied, understood, and imitated, would shed a brighter light than all earthly wisdom can find, upon the dark trials and mysteries of our lot. It is true that whatever you most need or sigh for—whatever you most want, to still the troubles of your heart, or compose the agitations of your mind—the simple life of Jesus can teach you.

To show this, I need only take the most ordinary admissions from the lips of any Christian, or I may say, of almost any unbeliever.

Suppose that the world were filled with beings like Jesus. Would

not all the great ills of society be instantly relieved? Would you not immediately dismiss all your anxieties concerning it—perfectly sure that all was going on well? Would not all coercion, infliction, injury, injustice, and all the greatest suffering of life, disappear at once? If, at the stretching out of some wonder-working wand, that change could take place, would not the change be greater far, than if every house, hovel, and prison on earth, were instantly turned into a palace of ease and abundance, and splendour? Happy then would be these "human years;" and the eternal ages would roll on in brightness and beauty! The "still, sad music of humanity," that sounds through the world, now in the swellings of grief, and now in pensive melancholy,—would be exchanged for anthems, lifted up to the march of time, and bursting out from the heart of the world!

But let us make another supposition, and bring it still nearer to ourselves. Were any one of us a perfect imitator of Christ—were any one of us clothed with the divinity of his virtue and faith; do you not perceive what the effect would be? Look around upon the circle of life's ills and trials, and observe the effect. Did sensual passions assail you? How weak would be their solicitation to the divine beatitude of your own heart! You would say, "I have meat to eat that you know not of." Did want tempt you to do wrongly, or curiosity to do rashly? You would say to the one, "Man shall not *live* by bread alone; there is a higher life which I must live:" and to the other, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Did ambition spread its kingdoms and thrones before you, and ask you to swerve from your great allegiance? Your reply would be ready: "Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Did the storm of injury beat upon your head, or its silent shaft pierce your heart? In meekness you would bow that head—in prayer, that heart—saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." What sorrow could reach you—what pain, what anguish, that would not be soothed by a faith and a love like that of Jesus? And what blessing could light on you, that would not be brightened by a filial piety and gratitude like his? The world around you would be new, and the heavens over you would be new—for they would be all, and all around their ample range, and all through their glorious splendours, the presence and visitation of a Father. And you yourself would be a new creature; and you would enjoy a happiness, new, and now scarcely known on earth.

And I cannot help observing here, that if such be the spontaneous conviction of every mind at all acquainted with Christianity, what a powerful independent argument there is for receiving Christ as a guide and example. It were an anomaly, indeed, to the eye of reason, to reject the solemn and self-claimed mission of one whom it would be happiness to follow—whom it would be perfection to imitate. Yet if the former—the special mission—*were* rejected, if it were, as it may be, by possibility, honestly rejected; what is a man to think of himself, who passes by, and discards the latter—the teaching of the life of Christ? Let it be the man Rousseau, or the man Hume, or any man in these days, who says that he believes nothing in churches, or miracles, or missions from heaven. But he admits, as they did, and as every one must, that in Jesus Christ was the most perfect unfolding of all divine

beauty and happiness that the world ever saw. What, I say, is he to do with this undeniable and undenied Gospel of the life of Jesus? Blessed is he if he receives it; that is unquestionable. All who read of him, all the world, admits that. But what shall we say if he rejects it? If any one *could* be clothed with the eloquence of Cicero or the wisdom of Socrates, and *would not*, all the world would pronounce him a fool —would say that he denied his humanity. And surely if any one could be invested with all the beauty and grandeur of the life of Jesus, and would not, he must be stricken with utter moral fatuity; he must be accounted to have denied his highest humanity. The interpretation of his case is as plain as words can make it; and it is this: "Light has come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

"In him was life," says our text, "and the life was the light of men."

I have attempted to bring home the conviction of this, simply by bringing before your minds the supposition that the world, and we ourselves were like him. But as no conviction, I think, at the present stage of our Christian progress, is so important as this, let me attempt to impress it, by another course of reflections. I say, of *our* Christian progress. We have cleared away many obstacles, as we think, and have come near to the simplicity of the Gospel. No complicated ecclesiastical organization nor scholastic creed stands between us and the solemn verities of Christianity. I am not now pronouncing upon those accumulations of human devices; but I mean especially to say, that no mystical notions of their necessity or importance mingle themselves with *our* ideas of acceptance. We have come to stand before the simple, naked shrine of the original Gospel. We have come, through many human teachings and human admonitions, to Christ himself. But little will it avail us to have come so far, if we take not one step further. Now, what I think we need is, to enter more deeply into the study and understanding of what Christ was.

This, let us attempt. And I pray you and myself, brethren, not to be content with the little that can now be said; but let us carefully read the Gospels for ourselves, and lay the law of the life of Christ, with rigorous precision, to our own lives, and see where they fail and come short. It is true, indeed, and I would urge nothing beyond the truth, that the life of Jesus is not, in every respect, an example for us. That is to say, the manner of his life was, in some respects, different from what ours can, or should be. He was a teacher; and the most of us are necessarily and lawfully engaged in the business of life. He was sent on a peculiar mission; and none of us have such a mission. But the spirit that was in him, may be in us. To some of the traits of this spirit, as the only sources of light and help to us, let me now briefly direct your attention.

And first, consider his self-renunciation. How entire that self-renunciation was; how completely his aims went beyond personal ease and selfish gratification; how all his thoughts and words and actions were employed upon the work for which he was sent into the world; how his whole life, as well as his death, was an offering to that cause— I need not tell you. Indeed, so entirely is this his accredited character; so completely is he set apart in our thoughts, not only to a peculiar

office, but set apart too and separated from all human interests and affections, that we are liable to do his character, in this respect, no proper justice. We isolate him, till he almost ceases to be an example to us; till he almost ceases to be a *virtuous* being. He stands alone in Judea; and the words society, country, kindred, friendship, home, seem to have, to him, only a fictitious application. But these ties bound him as they do others; the gentleness and tenderness of his nature made him peculiarly susceptible to them; no more touching allusions to kindred and country can be found in human language than his, as when he said, "Oh! Jerusalem! Jerusalem!" in foresight of her coming woes—as when he said on the cross, "Behold thy mother! —behold thy son!" Doubtless he desired to be a benefactor to his country, an honour to his family; and when Peter, deprecating his dishonour and degradation, said, "Be it far from thee, Lord! this shall not be unto thee;" and he turned and said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men,"—it has been beautifully suggested, that the very energy of that repulse to his enthusiastic and admiring disciple, shows, perhaps, that he felt that there was something in his mind that was leaning that way; that the things of men were contending with the things of God in him; that he too much dreaded the coming humiliation and agony, to wish to have that feeling fostered in his heart.

But he rejected all this; he renounced himself—renounced all the dear affections and softer pleadings of his affectionate nature, that he might be true to higher interests than his own, or his country's, or his kindred's.

Now I say, that the same self-renunciation would relieve us of more than half of the difficulties, and of the diseased and painful affections of our lives. Simple obedience to rectitude, instead of self-interest—simple self-culture, instead of over cultivating the good opinion of others,—how many disturbing and irritating questions would these single-hearted aims take away from our bosom meditations! Let us not mistake the character of this self-renunciation. We are required not to renounce the nobler and better affections of our nature—not to renounce happiness—not to renounce our just dues of honour and love from men. It is remarkable that our Saviour, amidst all his meekness, and all his sacrifices, always claimed that he deserved well of men—deserved to be honoured and beloved. It is not to vilify ourselves that is required of us—not to renounce our self-respect, the just and reasonable sense of our merits and deserts—not to renounce our own righteousness, our own virtue, if we have any; such falsehood towards ourselves gains no countenance from the example of Jesus: but it is to renounce our sins, our passions, our self-flattering delusions; and it is to forego all outward advantages which can be gained only through a sacrifice of our inward integrity, or through anxious and petty contrivances and compliances. What we have to do is, to choose and keep the better part—to secure that, and let the worst take care of itself; to keep a good conscience, and let opinion come and go as it will; to keep high self-respect, and to let low self-indulgence go; to keep inward happiness, and let outward advantages hold a subordinate place. Self-renunciation, in fine, is, not to renounce ourselves in the highest character—not to renounce our moral selves, ourselves as the creatures

and children of God; *herein* rather it is to cherish ourselves, to make the most of ourselves, to hold ourselves inexpressibly dear. What, then, is it precisely to renounce ourselves? It is to renounce our selfishness; to have done with this eternal self-considering, which now disturbs and vexes our lives; to cease that ever asking "and what shall we have?"—to be content with the plenitude of God's abounding mercies; to feast upon that infinite love that is shed all around us and within us; and so to be happy. I see many a person in society, honoured, rich, beautiful, but wearing, still, an anxious and disturbed countenance—many a one upon whom this simple principle, this simple self-forgetting, would bring a change in their appearance, demeanour, and the whole manner of their living and being—a change that would make them tenfold more beautiful, rich, and honoured. Yes; strange as it may seem to them—what they want is, to commune deeply, in prayer and meditation, with the spirit of Jesus—to be clothed, not with outward adorning, but with the simple self-forgetting, single hearted truth and beauty of his spirit. This is the change—this is the conversion that they want, to make them lovely and happy beyond all the aspirations of their ambition, and all their dreams of happiness.

Have you never observed how happy is the mere visionary schemer, quite absorbed in his plans,—quite thoughtless of everything else? Have you never remarked how easy and felicitous is the manner in society, the eloquence in the public assembly, the whole life's action, of one who has forgotten himself? For this reason, in part, it is, that the eager pursuit of fortune is often happier than the after enjoyment of it; for now the man begins to *look about* for happiness, and *to ask* for a respect and attention which he seldom satisfactorily receives; and many such are found, to the wonder and mortification of their families, looking back from their splendid dwellings, and often referring to the humble shop in which they worked, and wishing, in their hearts, that they were there again.

It is our inordinate self-seeking, self-considering, that is ever a stumbling-block in our way. It is this which spreads questions, snares, difficulties, around us. It is this that darkens the very ways of providence to us, and makes the world a less happy world to us than it might be. There is one thought that could take us out from all these difficulties; but we cannot think it. There is one clue from the labyrinth; there is one solution of this struggling philosophy of life within us; it is found in that Gospel, that life of Jesus, with which we have, alas! but little deep heart-acquaintance. Every one must know that if he could be elevated to that self-forgetting simplicity and disinterestedness, he would be relieved from more than half of the inmost trials of his bosom. What, then, can be done for us, but that we be directed, and that, too, in a concern as solemn as our deepest wisdom and welfare, to the Gospel of Christ? "In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

In him was the life of perfect love. This is the second all-enlightening, all-healing principle that the Gospel of Christ commends to us. It is indeed the main and positive virtue, of which self-renunciation is but the negative side.

Again, I need not insist upon the pre-eminence of this principle in the life of our Saviour. But I must again remind you that this

principle is not to be looked upon as some sublime abstraction—as merely a love that drew him from the bliss of heaven, to achieve some stupendous and solitary work on earth. It was a vital and heartfelt love to all around him; it was affection to his kindred, tenderness to his friends, gentleness and forbearance towards his disciples, pity to the suffering, forgiveness to his enemies, prayer for his murderers; love flowing all round him as the garment of life, and investing pain and toil, and torture, and death, with a serene and holy beauty.

It is not enough to renounce ourselves, and there to stop. It is not enough to wrap ourselves in our close garment of reserve and pride, and to say, "The world cares nothing for us, and we will care nothing for the world; society does us no justice, and we will withdraw from it our thoughts, and see how patiently we can live within the confines of our own bosom, or in quiet communion, through books, with the mighty dead." No man ever found peace or light in this way. The misanthropic recluse is ever the most miserable of men, whether he lives in cave or castle. Every relation to mankind, of hate, or scorn, or neglect, is full of vexation and torment. There is nothing to do with men, but to love them; to contemplate their virtues with admiration, their faults with pity and forbearance, and their injuries with forgiveness. Task all the ingenuity of your mind to devise some other thing, but you never can find it. To all the haughtiness and wrath of men, I say—however they may disdain the suggestion—the spirit of Jesus is the only help for you. To hate your adversary will not help you; to kill him will not help you; nothing within the compass of the universe can help you, but to love him. Oh! how wonderfully is man shut up to wisdom—barred, as I may say, and imprisoned, and shut up to wisdom; and yet he will not learn it.

But let that love flow out upon all around you, and what could harm you? It would clothe you with an impenetrable, heaven-tempered armour. Or suppose—to do it justice—that it leaves you, all defencelessness, as it did Jesus—all vulnerableness, through delicacy, through tenderness, through sympathy, through pity; suppose that you suffer, as all must suffer; suppose that you be wounded, as gentleness only can be wounded; yet how would that love flow, with precious healing, through every wound! How many difficulties too, both within and without a man, would it relieve! How many dull *minds* would it rouse; how many depressed minds would it lift up! How many troubles, in society, would it compose—how many enmities would it soften—how many questions answer! How many a knot of mystery and misunderstanding would be untied by one word spoken in simple and confiding truth of heart! How many a rough path would be made smooth, and crooked way be made straight! How many a solitary place would be made glad, if love were there; and how many a dark dwelling would be filled with light! "In him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Once more; there was a sublime spirituality in the mind of Jesus, which must come into our life to fill up the measure of its light. It is not enough, in my view, to yield ourselves to the blessed bonds of love and self-renunciation in the immediate circles of our lives. Our minds must go out into the infinite and immortal regions, to find sufficiency and satisfaction for the present hour. There must be a breadth of

contemplation in which this world shrinks—I will not say to a point—but to the narrow span that it is. There must be aims, which reign over the events of life, and make us feel that we can resign all the advantages of life, yea, and life itself; and yet be conquerors and more than conquerors through him who has loved us.

There is many a crisis in life when we need a faith like the martyr's to support us. There are hours in life, like martyrdom—as full of bitter anguish, as full of utter earthly desolation—in which more than our sinews—in which we feel as if our very heart-strings were stretched and lacerated on the rack of affliction—in which life itself loses its value, and we ask to die—in whose dread struggle and agony, life might drop from us, and not be minded. Oh! then must our cry, like that of Jesus, go up to the pitying heavens for help, and nothing but the infinite and the immortal can help us.—Calculate, then, all the gains of earth, and they are trash—all its pleasures, and they are vanity—all its hopes, and they are illusions; and, then, when the world is sinking beneath us, must we seek the everlasting arms to bear us up—to bear us up to heaven. Thus was it with our great Example, and so must it be with us. In him was life—the life of self-renunciation, the life of love, the life of spiritual and all-conquering faith—and that life is the light of men. Oh! blessed light! come to our darkness; for our soul is dark, our way is dark, for want of thee—come to our darkness, and turn it into day; and let it shine brighter and brighter, till it mingles with the light of the all-perfect and everlasting day!

ON THE SHORTNESS OF LIFE.

[PREACHED AT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.]

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1 CORINTHIANS vii. 29: "But this I say, brethren, the time is short."

THE epochs of time are among the most powerful teachers of religion. One of those epochs we are now again approaching. We are assembled in the sanctuary, my friends, on the last Sabbath evening of the year. How short is the period since we were last assembled, at a similar epoch! Truly, the time is short: the time of life is short. Well, that it has its periods, its pauses for reflection! Let the dying year then teach us. It would argue a kind of brutish insensibility to take our leave of another such period—so large a period of our lives—and to ask ourselves no questions about life, its course, its great design, its solemn close. The departing year is the emblem of departing life; and *these* last hours have solemn thoughts to offer us, like to those which will visit us in the last hours of our stay on earth. Let us meditate upon time, then, while to meditate may profit us—before it be said, not of the departing year only, but of departing life, "it shall be no longer."

In particular, I shall, for the present, invite you to meditate on the shortness of time—that is, of the time of life; its shortness in relation to time absolutely considered; the shortness, still more, of that portion of life which can be rescued from the unavoidable demands of the body, and devoted singly, in contemplation and prayer, to the soul; and its shortness, in fine, and yet more emphatically, in comparison with the work we have to do, and the consequences that are depending on it.

First; the brevity of life, compared with time absolutely considered.

It is common I know to make the reflection that life is short, but I do not think it is common to feel it. Least of all is it common in the earlier periods of life. Its termination is then contemplated as afar off, amidst the shadows of age, amidst the dimness of an uncertain future; and life seems to be almost boundless. The indefinite is all that we mean by the boundless; and life possesses that indefiniteness, that it imposes upon the young mind almost the feeling that it has no end. There is another influence, tending to produce the same result; and that is worldliness. To the worldly mind, life is everything. And if life *is* everything, it must be something vast and immense. For we were made to grasp interests of infinite magnitude; the intellectual comprehension of an immortal mind must be of this nature. It must feel that the objects which engross it are vast and momentous. And

therefore, although we fix our minds upon the little interests of a day, these interests, instead of appearing to be the little things that they are, do rather swell out and expand, in our view, to an importance and durableness corresponding to the vastness of our capacities, to the reach of our desires, to the extent of our hopes. So that the greatness of our nature, instead of going out, as it ought to do, to the divine objects and enduring ages of a future life, often makes to itself a greatness of this world, and an immortality of this frail and fleeting life. So it must be. The feelings, the desires, the fears and hopes, the interests and the objects, that are wrapt up in the soul of man, *must* expand to an indefinable magnitude, and run onward to an indefinable duration.

If we would correct this erroneous estimate of things, let us, for a moment, compare our life with the generations that have gone before us. How many thousands and millions of human beings have lived and died, within the compass of known and recorded history!—how many millions, just like ourselves—with just as many and capacious feelings and desires, with just as strong fears and hopes, with just as weighty interests and dear objects—have had their hour upon earth, and have passed away from the sum of human existence! How many generations have passed, like the passing clouds upon the face of the earth—how many generations, I say, have thus passed, of which, and compared with which, our life is but a vapour! What, then, is the stability or the permanency of our earthly being. What *is* it, when the lives of unnumbered and innumerable millions have all been included in the brief space of this world's duration? Look around upon your objects, and magnify them to the utmost, and then tell us what they are. You are a merchant. Your ships are traversing distant oceans. Your property is spread abroad, perhaps, on the waves of two hemispheres. Your plans, your expectations are great, and life, in your account, is also something great. It seems to you to have many treasures, and many long years in store for you. Life seems to you, it may be, to have a range sufficiently extensive to satisfy your desires. The world, you say, is enough for you. But where are the princely traders of Tyre and Tarshish? Where are the merchants of Babylon, that were the great men of the earth? And where are all their treasures? Is the breath of existence that was breathed in Babylon three thousand years ago, and that you are breathing again, as soon to pass away—is this enough for you? Was the taper of shining prosperity, that was kindled in many a house in Rome, and went out ages since—that was kindled in the morning, and died away at evening—was it a thing bright and enduring enough to satisfy all your desires? Nay, where are the men whose footsteps resounded on yonder pavements fifty years since?—busy, active, prosperous, and perhaps rich—where are they? A few years hence, another preacher will ask the same question concerning us, and the answer will come from our graves!

Or, you are a man with the objects of ambition before you. You would be distinguished in your occupation, or pursuit, or profession, or in the style of living, or in the dignity of office. You would be known —to the literary, to the great, or to the multitude. You would be the *first* — in some chosen sphere, — in genius, in conversation, in industry, in wealth, or in wit. Your heart beats high with this hope,

and you have plans and projects; and the life which is to accomplish them rises into a momentous concern. But oh! vain toil of ambition! poor strife for the pre-eminence—brief hour of success! what is it? What is it to gain a certain position, which, the moment it is reached, is lost for ever? How many have struggled, just as you do—have struggled and striven, and wearied themselves out with exertions and anxieties, and worn down their faculties with study, or care, and have vexed their spirits with fears and envyings, and they are gone! the brief struggle is over; the coveted wealth or honour is lost at the very moment of attainment. Like the waves of the ever-flowing sea, their earthly fortunes have risen and fallen,—have risen but to fall—and to be lost in the tide of passing generations. So shall thine fall, and mine; and he who moralizes on this very spot, a century hence, may think as little of us as we do of those who, two hundred years ago, wandered, with their bow and spear, along this wooded shore,—and have vanished, a dark cloud, from the face of the earth.

Or, to specify once more, you are a parent—a father or a mother; your children are growing up around you, and their prospects are opening before you the scenes of future years. You are living anew in them, and you hope to live long with them; and so, it may be, you shall. But in how many thousands and millions of dwellings has all this passed,—all that is precious and sacred in the joy and hope of domestic love,—and it is gone, like an evening's pleasure, or the dream of morning? There have been fathers and mothers, and husbands and wives, and affectionate children and kindred,—the long ages have been crowded with those who were clothed as we are, with all the sympathies of this mortal life; but the bright cloud of happiness that shone upon them, and, kindling with all the hues of hope, led them onward, was even a vapour that appeared for a little time, and then vanished away. I was reading some while since the life of a celebrated person, no other than Sir Walter Scott—a man whose writings have filled the world with his fame—who was surrounded by troops of friends and admirers; —and his biographer, speaking of a large company of his most intimate friends, including the most of his own family, who were gathered at his residence in the summer of 1821, makes this striking reflection— "Death has laid a heavy hand upon that circle—as happy a circle I believe as ever met. Bright eyes now closed in dust, gay voices for ever silenced, seem to haunt me as I write. With three exceptions, they are all gone!" But sixteen years had passed, and, with three exceptions, all were gone. So shall thy family ties be broken, and thy troops of friends and thy gay circles shall sink to rest, and other beings shall come forward to share the same fate, till all be gathered into the habitations of eternity.

Such is the brevity of our life compared with the periods of this world's duration. How brief is it then, in comparison with the periods of eternity! When we look back upon the history of the world, upon its eras and revolutions, the successions of empire, and the progress of generations and races of men, we are apt to feel as if these periods of time were vast, and almost immeasurable. But to that Being, who is from everlasting to everlasting, "a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." To that Being, who has placed orbs of light at such distances in the heavens, that a

ray, travelling with its inconceivable speed, has required years to come to us,—to that eternal Being the history of this world must be as the history of an hour. What then is our life? We talk of the insects, that are born and perish in the sunbeam,—that live and die in the passing breeze of summer; such are we. In the range of duration from the past to the coming eternity, our life is but a moment, a passing breath of air, a vanishing beam of light. Like the arrow that flieth, like the weaver's shuttle, like a vapour which a ray of the sun dissolveth, like the flying shadow upon the summer's field, so our life passeth away. "O remember," says Job, "that my life is a breath: the eye of him that hath seen me, shall see me no more; thine eyes are upon me, and I am not. As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so man goeth down to the grave."

II. But if life is thus short, in relation to time absolutely considered, it is yet shorter in its specific opportunities for gaining any certain, any abiding, any spiritual good.

There is the toil of the hands, and the toil of the head—which often as little tends to make the heart better and happier: there are many and long hours of weariness, when the burden of the body weighs heavily upon us; there are food and raiment to be prepared, after toil has provided them; and then comes

> "Sleep, that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care,
> The death of each day's life."

And when all the demands of the mortal nature are thus satisfied, how small a portion is left for direct and specific attention to that which is immortal! I say for direct and specific attention. I do not forget that I have often insisted that the *whole* of life, all its care, business, and pleasure, may be and must be consecrated to the service of the spirit. I certainly do and must remonstrate against the common idea that life is divided into distinct departments, one of which belongs to business, another to pleasure, and another to religion. I say that they all belong to religion. But still it is to be no less carefully stated and earnestly maintained, that in order to this consecration of the entire life to religion, there must be certain seasons for meditation, self-examination, and prayer. Religion must be the spirit of every hour; but it cannot be the meditation of every hour. That must be the business of certain times and seasons. And what I say is, that these seasons are made by the pressure of other engagements, to be but too few and short. We can often send up from the midst of our labours and engagements, an ejaculatory prayer to God; we can deeply and devotedly commune with him each morning before we enter upon the secular pursuits of the day; we can give our thoughts wholly to such contemplations, in the seasons of public worship. And we can, I think, in many a silent hour when the day is going down, when the evening shadows fall, sit down, in solitariness and meditation, and think of the uses and ends of life. And what I urge is, that we make a diligent use of these brief opportunities and seasons. If you were sent to a distant country, with a momentous commission to execute, if your time was limited and brief, and if from the necessary cares and fatigues of a hasty journey, you had only a few momentary intervals of thought, a little season in the morning and in the evening, and an occasional day

of rest, to study the business you had to transact; would you be found idling away those intervals, and seasons, and opportunities? Or would you be found putting off the study of the very business on which you were sent, to the moment of your leaving the country? Would you put off to the crowded and agitating hour of your departure, all careful and deliberate consideration of the very object of your journey? O christian! O man, whosoever thou art! pilgrim of these hasting years! traveller to eternity! Art thou putting off thy great concern? Art thou forgetting thine errand? Art thou idling away the precious seasons of prayer and meditation? Art thou never seeking nor finding the brief intervals for reflection and resolution and solemn vows to heaven? Let the past year testify. How has it been with us in the sanctuary? When the voice of prayer has ascended here, have we seized the moments as precious, and given our whole hearts to God? Or has the dreadful and deadly sin of formality cleaved to us, and is the handwriting of memory upon these walls, a handwriting of condemnation? And how, moreover, has it been with us in our retirements and in the midst of our business—of our merchandise and labour, of our counting-rooms and offices? Have frequent and earnest thoughts of christian fidelity and truth, of spiritual-mindedness, and silent offerings of prayer, gone up from them, as a memorial and a witness for us?—Good friends! I must ask these questions from myself, and I hope there is no impropriety in giving them expression to you. For I have preached in vain, if there are no such witnesses for me in your places of business, in your houses, in your hearts.

These are inquiries, indeed, that become us at all times; but *most* of all in these last hours of the departing year, when the admonition is growing louder and louder of the brevity of our life, and the transient nature of all its opportunities. And these circumstances, in which we at this moment stand, if any can, must give force to the exhortation, that we be found more faithful, and earnest, and diligent, and ready to every good word and work. For we are taught by the swift hours that are hasting to fill up the measure of another period of our lives, that the time is short—short even at the largest—and shorter still in the portion of it that may be rescued for thoughts of the soul.

III. And let us now add to these reflections, that our life is yet more and more emphatically brief, when considered in relation to the work we have to do. It is in this respect, chiefly, that we are wont to account any period of time either long or short. The season that would be long for an amusement, would be short for obtaining an education. The time that would hang heavily on our hands in a party of pleasure, would fly all too swiftly for the transaction of a complicated business. The moral business of this life, the spiritual education for future worlds—how vast a work is it!

I will not wrap the future in mysteries; nor strive to throw upon it gigantic shadows of danger, that may serve only to alarm the imagination. I would that the simple, the undisguised, the unutterably solemn verities of a moral retribution, could be set before us; and that we might see there—no image, no dazzling brightness, no impenetrable gloom—but every virtue enjoying its blessed recompense, and every sin reaping, in loneliness and sorrow, its fruits of bitterness. Nor will I speak to you in set and technical phrases, of the preparation for

futurity. But I say, that every step you take in the moral course, every moral temper you cherish, shall penetrate far and with unknown power, into the periods of your future being. I speak with words of truth and soberness, and I might say, with the solemn and reiterated asseveration of the great teacher, "verily, verily," it shall be thus.

Let us then antedate the periods, let us forestall the allotments, the very procedures of the coming retribution; let us commune with the powers of the world to come, and ask *them* what we shall do to be saved:—to be saved from the dominion and wo of our unholy passions. They will tell us, and our reason will tell us, and our observation will tell us, everything will proclaim, that it is no slight or brief work. To pluck the root of bitterness from our hearts; to quench the fires of anger, and envy, and pride; to control and calm the wild and wayward passions; to become self-denying, and humble, and gentle, and pure, and heavenly in our disposition; to rise to the love of God, and to the practice of habitual devotion; to be, in fine, the happy and glorious creatures that God made us to be—oh! this is a mighty work. No such toil is there upon the billows of ocean, nor on the furrowed earth, as this toil of the spirit! It is no slight work, I had almost said, to form *evil* habits, to contract the stains of guilt. But when day after day has added its shade to that dark spot on the soul, when indulgence after indulgence has lent power to some evil passion, when ceaseless repetition has imparted strength to some evil habit, and circumstances have long ministered food to it, and falsehood, in its thousand forms, has bound it to the soul with its thousand chains,—who shall think the work of recovery an easy task? Shall it take a long time for vice to grow, and gain the mastery; and shall less be required for rescue from it, and for virtue to gain the ascendency? Shall the sin that has obtained a place and an abode within us only by long solicitation—shall it be expelled in a moment? Is the work of care briefer than the work of neglect? Is self-denial more easily or more quickly to be accomplished than self-indulgence? Do we account it a slighter task to extirpate an evil passion than it was to form it? No, it may take but a moment to receive the touch of contagious moral disease, but if that disease shall be suffered to fix itself, if it be not instantly counteracted, it shall require long and wearisome hours and days to heal it! One assault, one blow of temptation, may cause the feeble virtue of man to waver, and eventually to fall; but hard shall be the effort to collect his prostrate powers, and slowly shall he rise from that deep degradation.

Take an instance, any instance. You are an irritable person. And the sin of anger you must put away from you, before you can be permanently happy, in this world or in any other. Can you conquer it in a day? Can you do it in a month? Can you do it in a year? How short and hasty is the period of life in which you have to do this work! If you had but this single sin to struggle with, every moment of your coming life in which you could pray and strive against it, might not be too much to accomplish the task of self-government; alas! it might be all too short. But it is not one sin only; it is a host that you have to encounter. You are worldly, or vain, or envious, or sensual; and you may be all these. And, in addition to all this, you may be undevout; and never have learned to take hold of the strength of prayer, and to put on the armour of God. Your foe is legion, and dwelleth among

the rocks and fastnesses of habit; and this host of evil tempers and passions, warring against your happiness, and for ever to war against it, till conquered—this host there is no miracle to dispossess or overcome. Or shall I say that reflection, and effort, and self-denial, and watchfulness, and prayer, are the miracles that are to do it. Yes, they are miracles, too seldom seen; and when they are seen, and when they put forth all their strength, they are of no sudden operation; they must do their work slowly.

And yet, I say again, how short is the time in which they have to do their work! How short, at the longest, is the life in which these spiritual prodigies, and signs, and wonders, are to be wrought out! Let the departing year, ere yet it is gone for ever, again admonish us of the brevity of life—again tell us, that the time is short. How many things that we have done during this one brief year, shall remain upon the earth when we are gone! We have worked with the frail materials of earth, but they are stronger than we. The very leaf, on which we have written our bonds and deeds, or our testaments, or our thoughts of religion, truth, and wisdom—that very leaf, which the flame of a taper could consume in a moment, shall last longer than we. The very raiment which clothes us, though it be of the frailest texture, may be more enduring than we, and the feeble moth that consumes it may be our survivor. How truly is it said, that our foundation is in the dust, and that we are crushed before the moth! We have got gain, and we have builded houses, and we have proudly launched forth our ships, to have dominion over the seas; but our gains shall be for others; and these habitations which we have reared shall remain long after they have known us no more; and the ships we have builded shall breast the shock of the ocean billows, when the last wave of earthly trouble shall have passed over us for ever!

Once more let the departing year admonish us. We have come together to receive its admonition. Let it not be in vain. It may be the last admonition of this kind that we shall ever receive. When the next message of the closing year comes to warn us, it may find us gone where admonitions never come. Now, therefore, let us be faithful. Now, let us resolve, while it is called to-day, and in every coming day, let us strive—to do every spiritual work that our hand findeth to do, with all our might—without delay, without neglect, without any possible failure.

The time is short. How brief, how transitory, how evanescent is a year! So will life appear, when we stand on the borders, to us, of all earthly time. Look back upon the past year. It is gone like a dream! A few such dreams—and life itself is gone for ever! But there is one thing that can turn this unsubstantial and otherwise fearful dream of life, into a blessed reality; and that is steadfast virtue, humble piety, devoted prayer, the true service of God. So live then, that life be not a frightful dream to visit your soul hereafter with threatening and horror, but a blessed reality to bear you up to the regions of an immortal life.

REFLECTIONS AT THE CLOSE OF DAY.

GENESIS xxiv. 63: "And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide."

THE employment of the evening hour, here described, and attributed to the ancient patriarch, is variously represented by different commentators. Some say that he went out to meditate, others to pray, and others render it, that he went out simply to walk in the field at eventide. I have only to remark that there is no impropriety in supposing either of these to be the true meaning; and that all of them might be very naturally united in such an hour and place.

But be this as it may—I am about to propose to you some of those reflections which are suitable to the close of day.

I. And the first and most natural reflection to make at the return of the evening, is, on the blessings we have enjoyed: the blessings of nature, of existence, and the blessings with which life and the world are filled. To the contemplation of nature simply considered—to the contemplation of that grand display which every day's revolution opens to us, there is a prevailing indifference, arising, I think, from causes which are not altogether of a moral character. There have been so many fanciful and merely pretty descriptions of nature, as to have brought a kind of discredit on all professed meditations of this kind. It is almost felt as if it were the province of poets and sentimentalists only, with which common men on common occasions have little or nothing to do. And thus many of us, by a sort of formal maxim, have shut ourselves out from some of the most delightful and ennobling reflections. We have a *natural* obstacle to contend with, of sufficient strength, without creating any artificial ones. The *commonness* which attaches to everything in the world around us, has almost unavoidably tended to bring down all that is splendid, beautiful, and majestic in nature, to the character of what is tame, ordinary, and uninteresting. With what emotion does a man enter into some populous and magnificent city, which he has never before seen! With what enthusiasm do our travellers visit Rome, and survey its noble ruins of aqueducts, and temples, and triumphal arches! With what a fascination of the senses should we wander through some of those Oriental palaces or halls of which we read; amidst magnificent decorations of every material, form, and colouring—golden lamps, and resplendent mirrors, carved work and tapestry, and silken couches and carpets rich with all the dyes of the East; where luxury, and art, and imagination, have gathered all their treasures—where the air that circulates through them is loaded with perfume, and breathes with music:—we should

probably feel almost as if we were in another and ethereal world. And yet I do not hesitate to say, that all this is perfectly flat and insipid compared with what we witness in the revolution of every day! Let it only be new,—let it be seen for the first time,—let the earth be surveyed in such a season as this which is now passing over us;—let a being like ourselves be brought from some region where the sun never shone, where the fields were never clothed with verdure nor the trees with foliage: let him behold first, the glorious coming of the day, the golden East, the sun as he would burst from the clouds that wait upon his rising; let him look up to the heavens that spread in awful beauty and sublimity above him; let him gaze upon the earth around him with all its fair and various forms, its fresh verdure and flowery fields, its trees and forests, all waving in the breeze of morning; let him hear the song from the groves—the song of happiness that blends with all the sounds of the wakening earth; let him catch in his view the living streams as they flow, the extended plains, the majestic mountains, and then go forth and survey the boundless tracts of ocean; let him wander the live-long day, through all this world of beauty and magnificence,—and how poor and meagre would be to him, all the works of human power and art! Would he not meditate, as he walked forth at the eventide of such a day? Would he not say, "What a day has this been! a day of wonders!" Would he not almost instinctively bow down in adoration and gratitude, and in language like that which the poet has put into the mouth of the first man who saw all this loveliness and glory, would he not say,

> "These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
> Almighty! thine this universal frame,
> Thus wondrous fair. Thyself how wondrous then!
> Unspeakable—who sittest above these heavens,
> To us invisible, or dimly seen
> In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
> Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine."

Another subject of reflection, appropriate to the eventide, is life; life I mean, now, as a blessing.

A day's existence, since there are innumerable days like it, is commonly regarded, I believe, as one of the most indifferent matters of reflection; as scarcely worthy of notice, unless it be to speak of its vanity and unimportance, and the little it has offered of what is either interesting or estimable. Such, alas! is the fruit of prevailing irreligion. If it be asked of most persons concerning the day that has passed over them, what it has offered that is worthy of note, it is common to hear it spoken of with the greatest indifference, and often with ennui and weariness. It seems to be thought of as a hasty and vanishing moment; and a moment too, which, if it had not been hasty, would have been far worse than indifferent or wearisome. I do not say, that we should be often making grave or sentimental comments on the day that is past: but I fear that the opposite habit of speaking—the light, or indifferent, or dull habit—but too well indicates the insensibility there is to the value of existence, to the value of a day.

Others may feel something of its value. In their evening offerings of thanksgiving, they may acknowledge the favour of God to them that they have lived another day. But how little—may it not be—that the

most considerate and devout feel the import of this acknowledgment! How great is the privilege of existence!—to live, to think, to be—to have come forth, as we have, from darkness, from nothingness, to the joyful precincts of life and light; to be clothed with these senses, mysterious ministers, that bring all nature around, subject to us—all its fruits, its fair forms, its beautiful colours, its fragrance and its music, subject to our dominion. Doth not the *ephemeral insect*, that perishes in the hour or the day of its birth, that is confined to a little spot of earth, or pool of water—yet doth it not sport in the beams of life? Is not the *winged creature*, the frail passer-by of a season, buoyant and melodious, with the joy of its transient being? Hath not the goat upon the high hills—hath not the eagle on the mountain-top, a gift, for which he might well pay thanks, if he could do so? And what thanks, then, shall man render for his rational, religious, immortal being—man that he is, unlike the beasts of the field, capable of being thankful? *Theirs* is a life of sensation; *his*, a life of the soul. *Their* guidance and limit is instinct; *he* walks in the paths of knowledge, of improvement—yea, in the everlasting paths of improvement and hope. *They* shall pass away —from every valley and mountain, from every living stream, and every region of air, they shall quickly pass to the shades of eternal oblivion. But *man* that liveth now, shall live for ever. The day that is passing over him, belongs to a series of endless days and ages. What value shall he not attach to such an existence! What tribute of gratitude can be too profound, to mark its successive periods—its morning hour, and shades of evening!

I have spoken of nature and life, my friends; and besides their own intrinsic character and excellence, what blessings do they spread before us each day! How many are the testimonies of God's beneficence, in our condition and our nature, in our social relations, and individual experience, in occupation and in leisure, in business and recreation, in peace at home and safety abroad, in the pursuits and pleasures of daily activity, and the invitations of nightly repose! Perhaps we think not of all this, and we go to the kind rest that Heaven has provided, with complaint upon our lips. We say that we have many cares, and crosses, and vexations. And yet it may be, that there is no chamber of sickness in our dwelling, no suffering friend to sympathize with; no want at our daily board, no anguish of bereavement in our hearts. Oh! these would make us comprehend how favoured is the lot of health, and cheerfulness, and competence.

And yet, after all, how inadequate would be the best sense we could entertain of the blessings of a single day! Swiftly its hours and minutes pass, thickly its cares and occupations crowd upon us; but more swiftly do its mercies come, more closely do they press us on every side. The divisions of time, its minutes and instants, supply no measure, no means of enumeration for the benefits we receive. As each beating pulse is the signal of unnumbered movements in our animal frame, so the passing moments of life, mark, but do not count, innumerable operations and benefits in the universal frame of nature, and the countless tribes of living creatures. Ages of happiness are crowded into moments of God's goodness; and yet the moments of his goodness are lengthened out to everlasting ages. "How precious are thy thoughts unto us, O God! how great is the sum of them! if we should

count them, they are more in number than the sand; when we awake, we are still with thee."

Such are some of the thoughts of God's mercies, with which it would become us to close the day.

II. Of our faults and offences, it becomes us, in the next place, to think. Conscience has now its hour, and may, unmolested, do its office. It is a delicate monitor, and often, in the eagerness and hurry of our daily pursuits, it is trodden down, or passed by and neglected. But in the silence of evening, it has a distinct and audible voice. And for us, erring, sinning men, it is greatly wise to listen,

> "To talk with our past hours,
> And ask them what report they bore to heaven,
> And how they might have borne more welcome news."

The ancient philosophers earnestly recommended to their followers, to appropriate a part of each evening to a review of the acquisitions of the day. But the Christian philosopher, who knows that there is something more important even than knowledge, and far more difficult to obtain, will more earnestly exhort his disciples to settle at the close of every day, the great moral account with it. This account is not to be satisfactorily settled in any general way; not by the vague acknowledgment that we are sinners, that we have our share, of course, in human imperfection, that we are frail and erring mortals like the rest. Our particular faults must be dealt with, not our general delinquencies only —our particular omissions of duty must be called to mind; forgetfulness towards our Creator, or injury to our fellow-beings, either in deed, word, or thought. Our errors and offences are *daily* repeated, and what chance exists of their correction, if they are not daily recollected, and resolved against? It is *for want* of this daily and specific consideration of their faults, that so many persons, and so many even who profess to be leading a religious life, go on, ten, twenty, or thirty years, without making any evident progress, without any material amendment of their bad tempers, or spiritual negligences—just as passionate, as avaricious, as selfish or worldly, as they were years ago. Who has not been alarmed, for his very capacity of moral improvement, at the frequent remark, so often made, and so sadly verified—that men continue through life very much what they were in their early dispositions? "I see he is the same!" says some shrewd observer, and yet perhaps he speaks of one whom he knew forty years ago, and who, perhaps, during all these forty years, has imagined that he was a good Christian. But let it be known, that he is not, in any valuable sense, a good Christian, if he really be in all moral respects the same. He is not the true disciple of a thorough, spiritual, heart-searching conscience or Christianity. It is the nature of real religion to advance. It can no more rest than the rising light. It can no more fail to shine brighter and brighter. The doctrine of growth in grace is not an obsolete doctrine. It is the experience, it is the hope of every good man. It is his refuge from the gloom of utter wretchedness and despair.

I am not wandering from the subject. He who will, at every evening, seriously review the faults of the day, cannot fail, in process of time, to correct them—cannot fail to improve. And I know not how he can make this progress in any other way.

Nay, I fear that we must say more than this—however severely the rule may press upon many of us. We must say, that the man of a truly spiritual mind and tender conscience *will* take this daily, serious, and solicitous account of his faults and sins. I care not to maintain, that it will be in the *evening*, though that season will most naturally invite his thoughts to such a contemplation. But he cannot let day after day pass, without any special attention to what he feels to be the great interest of his life,—his growing purity, likeness to God, and preparation for a heavenly happiness.

But I say, that the evening will be the time most suitable for his employment. The man of a faithful conscience will then naturally ask how he commenced the day; with what thoughts and purposes; with what sincerity and earnestness of desire unto Almighty God for his aid and blessing. He will then pursue his inquiries into the labours and pleasures of the day. "Have I been industrious in business or study; temperate in the gratification of my senses and appetites; strong in the control of my passions; unwavering in my adherence to truth in my words, and to principle in my actions?" And to ask a still more serious and painful question—painful through the fears it awakens—"What have been my motives, in practising the duties of diligence, moderation, and integrity?—These are duties which I owe to myself. Have I, moreover, in these and all other duties, been faithful to God? Have I venerated his authority? Have I truly desired and aimed this day to serve him? Have I often thought of him in his works and ways; and am I more and more learning to make the whole of my life an offering to his goodness, a progress in the knowledge of his perfection, and a communion with his presence? In fine, have I this day been true to my social relations—true and faithful as a parent or a child, as a husband or wife, as the member of a family, of a friendly circle, or of the community? Have I been faithful in my transactions? Can I not only lay open my account-book, but the secret thoughts of my heart, to my neighbour, and appeal to him for the honesty in which I have dealt with him? Have I also been mild, forbearing, and considerate in all cases? Has no one gone from my presence soured, chagrined, or irritated by my rude, haughty, or hasty manners and words."

"Doubtless," an humble man will add, "I have done many things wrong;" but the question he has further to ask is, "Do I regret it, and am I now resolved that I will do so no more?"

I have only to add on this head, if you will permit me, one piece of advice—which is, that these impressions and purposes should be revived in the morning, and should be brought into an earnest application to God for his grace and guidance. This practice, I am sure, could not fail eventually to change the whole tenour of our life if it be wrong—to change it from the image of the earthly, to the image of the heavenly.

III. Finally, the close of the day calls us to consider the brevity and the end of life. We shall soon lay aside the garments of mortality, never to take them up; the blessings of life will soon be enjoyed: its sins will soon exist only in painful remembrance; its cares and toils will be succeeded by the repose of the grave. "The night of death cometh in which no man can work." It cometh;—you see not the sun actually move in the sky, but how soon it reaches the horizon!—

Life passes thus imperceptibly; you see not that it approaches to its limit; and yet it is approaching. The night cometh. You perceive not its advance, and you probably will not. You will be occupied with business; you will be agitated with plans for the future; you will be pursuing or enjoying; you will be on a journey, or taken up with the comforts or the cares of your home; and in an hour when you think not, the shadows of evening will descend, and chase away the vision of life for ever! Such, to most men's experience, is this present existence,—short, transient, fleeting; flying with a rapidity like that of the luminaries of heaven, and yet passing as silently in its course, as imperceptibly as they; and let it be remembered, as surely passing. The sun is not more certainly hasting through his daily revolutions, than he is, with every revolution, cutting short the term of our mortal being.

I grieve not, that it passes. Let it pass. Let it speed its flight.—Life is but the traveller's way, or the pilgrim's toil. It demands only our passing thoughts and affections, not our ultimate, fixed, firm reliance and attachment. It becomes us not to regret its passage, nor to mourn the loss of it, as if it were the extinction of all our hopes.—Our only concern with the shortness of life, is, so to number our days as to apply our hearts unto wisdom. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it quickly, for there is no work, nor wisdom, nor device, in the grave whither thou goest." That is to say, beyond this life, the proper work of life cannot be done; its wisdom is there to be recompensed, not exercised; and there is no device that can save us from the inevitable consequences of our negligence, unfaithfulness, or folly.

Let it pass, then; but let it pass in the ways of duty, in the exercise of wisdom, and the foresight of a watchful conscience. Let us mark its hasty progress. Let the descending shadows of every evening, not gloomily, but gently remind us of its speedy and certain decline. Let it pass; but let not the steps of time be swifter than the steps of our obedience; let not moments succeed more quickly than generous and kind affections shall spring up in our hearts; let us be diligent in proportion as the time is short; let our life, brief as it is in duration, frail as it is in its tenure, be strong in its hold on virtue,—be long in the series of good deeds,—and long endure in the remembrance of the good and the just.

ON RELIGION,

AS THE GREAT SENTIMENT OF LIFE.

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1 Corinthians xv. 19: "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable."

There is a nation, in modern times, of which it is constantly said, that it has no religion, that in this life only has it hope. One is continually assured, not by foreigners alone, but in that very country—I need not say that I speak of France—that the people there have no religion, that the religious sentiment has become nearly extinct among them.

Although there is, doubtless, some exaggeration in the statement, as would be very natural in a case so very extraordinary, and the rather, as the representation of it comes from a people who are fond of appearing an extraordinary and wonderful people, and of striking the world with astonishment; yet there is still so much truth in the representation, and it is a thing so unheard of in the history of all nations, whether Heathen, Mahometan, or Christian, that one is naturally led to reflect upon the problem which the case presents for our consideration. Can a nation go on without religion? Can a people live devoid of every religious hope, without being of all people the most miserable? Can human nature bear such a state? This is the problem.

It is the more important to discuss this problem, because the very spectacle of such a nation has some tendency to unhinge the faith of the world. The thoughtless at least, the young perhaps, who are generally supposed to feel less than others the necessity of this great principle, may be led to say with themselves, "Is not religion, after all, an error, a delusion, a superstition, with which mankind will yet be able to dispense?" A part of my reply to this question I propose to draw, especially, from the experience of the young. For I think, indeed, that instead of this being an age when men, and the young especially, can afford to dispense with the aid and guidance of religion, it is an age which is witnessing an extraordinary development of sensibility, and is urging the need of piety beyond, perhaps, all former ages. The circumstances, as I conceive, which have led to this development, are, the diffusion of knowledge, and the new social relationships introduced by free principles. But my subject, at present, does not permit me to enlarge upon these points.

Can the world, then, go on without religion? I will not inquire, now, whether human governments can go on. But can the human heart go on without religion? Can all its restless energies, its swelling

passions, its overburthening affections, be borne without piety? Can it suffer changes, disappointments, bereavements, desolations—ay, or can it satisfactorily bear overwhelming joy, without religion? Can youth, and manhood, and age—can life and death be passed through without that great principle which reigns over all the periods of life, which triumphs over death, and is enthroned in the immortality of faith, of virtue, of truth, and of God?

I answer, with a confidence that the lapse of a hundred nations into atheism could not shake, that it is not possible: in the eye of reason and truth, that is to say, it is not possible for the world, for the human heart, for life, to go on without religion. Religion naturally, fairly, rightly regarded, is the great sentiment of life: and this is the point which I shall now endeavour to illustrate.

What I mean by saying that religion is the great sentiment of life, is this—that all the great and leading states of mind which this life originates or occasions in every reflecting person, demand the sentiment of religion for their support and safety. Religion, I am aware, is considered by many as something standing by itself, and which a man may take as the companion of his journey, or not take, as he pleases; and many persons, I know, calmly, some, it is possible, contemptuously, leave it to stand aside and by itself, as not worthy of their invitation, or not worthy, at any rate, of being earnestly sought by them. But when they thus leave it, I undertake to say, that they do not understand the great mental pilgrimage on which they are going. If all the teachings of nature were withdrawn, if revelation were blotted out, if events did not teach,—yet the very experience of life, the natural development of human feeling, the history of every mind which, as a mind, has any history, would urge it to embrace religion as an indispensable resort. There is thus, therefore, not only a kind of metaphysical necessity in the very nature of the mind, and a moral call in all its situations, for religion; but there is wrapped up within the very germs of all human experience, of all human feeling, joyous or sorrowful —there is, attending the very development of all the natural affections, a want, a need inexpressible, of the power of that divine principle.

Let us trace this want, this need, in some of the different stages through which the character usually passes. Let us see whether this great necessity does not press down upon every period of life, and even upon its commencement—yes, whether upon the very heart of youth there are not already deep records of experience, that point it to this great reliance. I have in a former discourse spoken of the disappointments of youth; I now speak of its wants and dangers.

In youth, then—that is to say, somewhere between the period of childhood and manhood—there is commonly a striking development of sensibility and imagination. The passions, then, if not more powerful than at any other period, are at any rate more vivid, because their objects are new; and they are then most uncontrollable, because neither reason nor experience have attained to the maturity necessary to moderate and restrain them. The young have not lived long enough to see how direful are the effects of unbridled inclination, how baseless are the fabrics of ambition, how liable to disappointment are all the hopes of this world. And, therefore, the sensibility of youth is apt to possess a character of strong excitement, and almost of intoxication.

I never look upon one, at such a period, whose quick and ardent feelings mantle in the cheek at every turn, and flash in the eye, and thrill through the veins, and falter in the hurried speech, in every conversation—yes, and have deeper tokens in the gathering paleness of the countenance, in speechless silence, and the tightening chords of almost suffocating emotion,—I never look upon such an one, all fresh and alive, and yet unused to the might and mystery of the power that is working within,—a being full of imagination, too, living a life but half of realities, and full half of airy dreams—a being whom a thousand things, afterwards to be regarded with a graver eye, now move to laughter or to tears,—I never look upon such an one—how is it possible to do so?—without feeling that one thing is needful, and that is, the serenity of religion, the sobriety and steadiness of deep-founded principle, the strong and lofty aim of sacred virtue.

But the sensibility of youth is not always joyous or enthusiastic. Long ere it loses its freshness or its fascination, it oftentimes meets with checks and difficulties; it has its early troubles and sorrows. Some disappointment in its unsuspecting friendships, some school-day jealousy or affliction, some jar upon the susceptible nerves or the unruly passions, from the treatment of kindred, or friends, or associates;—or, at a later period, some galling chain of dependence, or poverty, or painful restraint; or else, the no less painful sense of mediocrity, the feeling in the young heart that the prizes of ambition are all out of its reach, that praise, and admiration, and love, all fall to the lot of others —some or other of these causes, I say, brings a cold blight over the warm and expanding affections of youth, and turns the bright elysium of life, for a season, into darkness and desolation. All this is not to be described as if it were a mere picture—just enough, perhaps, but to be considered no otherwise than as a matter of youthful feeling, soon to pass away, and to leave no results. This state of mind has results. And the most common and dangerous is a fatal recklessness. The undisciplined and too often selfish heart says, "I do not care; I do not care what others say or think of me; I do not care how they treat me. Those who are loved, and praised, and fortunate, are no better than I am; the world is unjust; the world knows me not; and I care not if it never knows me. I will wrap myself in my own garment; let them call it the garment of pride, or reserve—it matters not; I have feelings, and my own breast shall be their depository." Perhaps this recklessness goes farther, and the misguided youth says, "I will plunge into pleasure; I will find me companions, though they be bad ones; I will make my friends care for me in one way, if they will not in another,"—or he says, perhaps, "nobody cares for me, and therefore it is no matter what I do."

My young friends, have you ever known any of these various trials of youth? And, if you have, do you think that you can safely pass through them with no better guidance than your own hasty and headstrong passions? Oh! believe it not. Passion is never a safe impulse; but passion soured, irritated, and undisciplined, is least of all to be trusted. If in this life only you have hope, if no influence from afar take hold of your minds, if no aims stretching out to boundless and everlasting improvement, strengthen and sustain you, if no holy conscience, no heavenly principle, sets up its authority among your

wayward impulses, you are indeed of all beings most to be pitied. Unhappy for you is all this ardour, this kindling fervour of emotion, this throng of conflicting passions, this bright or brooding imagination, giving a false colouring and magnitude to every object; unhappy for you, and all the more unhappy, if you do not welcome the sure guidance, the strong control of principle, of piety, of prayer.

But let us advance to another stage of life and of feeling—to the maturity of life. And I shall venture to say that where the mind really unfolds with growing years; where it is not absorbed in worldly gains or pleasures, so as to be kept in a sort of perpetual childhood; where there is real susceptibility and reflection, there is apt to steal over us, without religion, a spirit of misanthropy and melancholy. I have often observed it, and without any wonder; for it seems to me, as if a thoughtful and feeling mind, without any trust in the great providence of God, without any communion of prayer with a Father in heaven, or any religious, any holy sympathy with its earthly brethren, or any cheering hope of their progress, must become reserved, distrustful, misanthropic, and often melancholy.

Youth, though often disappointed, is yet always looking forward; and it is looking forward with indefinite and unchecked anticipation. But in the progress of life there comes a time when the mind looks backward as well as forward; when it learns to correct the anticipations of the future, by the experience of the past. It has run through the courses of acquisition, pleasure, or ambition, and it knows what they are, and what they are worth. The attractions of hope have not, indeed, lost all their power, but they have lost a part of their charm.

Perhaps, even the disappointment of youth, though it has more of passion and grief in it, is not so bitter and sad as that of maturer life, when it says, "Well, and is this all? If I should add millions to my store; if I should reap new honours, or gain new pleasures, it will only be what I have experienced before; I know what it is; I know it all. There is no more in this life; I know it all." Ah! how cold and cheerless is that period of human experience—how does the heart of a man die within him, as he stands thus in the very midst of his acquisitions—how do his very honours and attainments teach him to mourn—and to mourn without hope, if there is no spiritual hope! If the great moral objects of this life, and the immortal regions of another life, are not spread before him, then is he most miserable. Yes, I repeat, his very success, his good fortune brings him to this. There are untoward circumstances, I know; there are afflictions that may lead a man to religion; but what I now say, is, that the natural progress of every reflecting mind however prosperous its fortunes, that the inevitable development of the growing experience of life unfolds, in the very structure of every human soul, that great necessity—the necessity of religion.

This world is dark and must be dark, without the light of religion; even as the material orb would be dark without the light of heaven to shine upon it. As if

> "The bright sun were extinguished, and the stars
> Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
> Rayless and pathless; and the icy earth
> Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;"

so would the soul, conscious of its own nature, be, without the light of God's presence shining around it, without those truths that beam like the eternal stars from the depths of heaven, without those influences, invisible and far off, like the powers of gravitation, to hold it steadily in its orbit, and to carry it onward with unerring guidance in its bright career. And no philosopher, no really intellectual being, ever broke from the bonds of all religious faith, without finding his course dreary, "blind and blackening" in the spiritual firmament. His soul becomes, in the expressive language of Scripture, "like a wandering star, or a cloud without water." No mean argument is this, indeed, for the great truths of religion. But whether it is so or not, it is a fact. I know, indeed, that many persons possessed of sense and talent in this world's affairs, do live without religion, and ordinarily, without any painful consciousness of wanting it. But what do men of mere sense and talent in this world's affairs, know of the insatiable and illimitable desires of the mind? What—what by very definition, as the votaries of worldly good, are they pursuing? Why, it is some object about as far distant in the bounded horizon of their vision, as that which the painted butterfly is pursuing—some flower, some bright thing a little before them; bright honour, or dazzling gold, or gilded pleasure. But let any mind awake to its real and sublime nature; let it feel the expanding, the indefinite reaching forth of those original and boundless thoughts which God has made it to feel; let it sound those depths, soar to those heights, compass those illimitable heavens of thought through which it was made to range; and then let that mind tell me, if it can, that it wants no religion; that it wants no central principle of attraction, no infinite object of adoration, and love, and trust. Nay, if any mind, whatever its pretensions, should tell me this, I should not hesitate, in my own judgment, to pronounce its acquisitions shallow, or at any rate partial, or at the best, technical and scholastic. For it is not true, my brethren, that intellectual weakness most stands in need of religion, or is most fitted to feel the need of it; but it is intellectual strength. I hold no truth to be more certain than this,—that every mind, in proportion to its real development and expansion, is dark, is disproportioned and unhappy without religion. If in this life alone it has hope, it is of all minds most miserable.

I have spoken of youth and manhood as developing the need of religion. Does age any less need it? Where can that want exist, if not in the aged heart? It is not alone that its pulses are faint and low; it is not alone, that so many of its once cherished objects have departed from it; it is not that the limbs are feeble, the eye dim, and the ear dull of hearing; it is not that the aged frame is bent towards that earth into which it is soon to sink and find its last rest; but what is the position of an old man? Where does he stand? One life is passed through; one season of being is almost spent; youth has found long since the goal of its career; manhood at length is gone; and he stands —where—and upon what? What is it that spreads before him? Is it a region of clouds and shadows? Is all before him dread darkness and vacuity—an eternal sleep—a boundless void? Thus would it be without religion, without faith! But how must he, who stands upon that shore of all visible being, from whence he can never turn back—how must he long for some sure word of promise, for some voice that can

tell him of eternal life, of eternal youth—of regions far away in the boundless universe of God, where he may wander on and onward for ever! Age, with faith, is but the beginning of life, the youth of immortality; the times and seasons of its being are yet before it; its gathered experience is but an education to prepare it for higher scenes and services: but age, without faith, is a wreck upon the shore of life, a ruin upon the beetling cliffs of time—tottering to its fall, and about to be engulphed and lost for ever!

I have thus attempted to show that religion is the great sentiment of each period of life. Let me now extend the same observation to those epochs in life, which are occasioned by changes in that material creation which surrounds us.

There are sentiments appropriate to the dying, and to the reviving year. What are they? How striking is the answer which is given in all literature and poetry! Men are able, no doubt, to walk through the round of the seasons, without much reflection; but the moment any sentiment is awakened, it is the sentiment of religion; it is a thoughtfulness about God's wisdom and beneficence—about life, and death, and eternity. Thus it is that every poet of the seasons—every poet of nature—is devout; devout in his meditations when he writes, if not devout in his habits always.

And what man, in thoughtful mood, can walk forth in the still and quiet season of autumn, and tread upon the seared grass that is almost painfully audible to the serious emotions of his heart, and listen to the fall of the leaf that seems, idle as it is, as if it were the footstep of some predestined event, and hear the far echo of the hills, and the solemn wind-dirge of the dying year, and not meditate in that hour—and not meditate upon things above the world, and above all its grosser cares and interests! "The dead, the loved, the lost," will come to him then—the world will sink like a phantom-shadow,—and eternity will be a presence; and heaven, through the serene depths of those opening skies, will be to him a vision.

But again; a change cometh. The seals of winter are broken; and lo! the green herb and the tender grass, and bird and blossom come forth; the clouds dissolve into softness, and open the azure depths beyond; and man goeth forth from imprisoning walls, and opens his bosom to the warmth and the breeze, and feels his frame expand with gladness and exultation. Then, what is he, if from the kindling joy of his heart arises no incense of gratitude. It is the hour of nature's, and ought to be of man's thanksgiving. The very stones would cry out—the green fields and the rejoicing hills would cry out against him, if he were not grateful. The sentiment of the spring-time is the sentiment of religious gratitude!

Let us look at other changes. There is a sentiment of the morning. The darkness is rolled away from the earth; the iron slumber of the world is broken; it is the daily resurrection-hour of rejoicing millions. God hath said again, "Let there be light;" and over the mountain-tops, and over the waves of ocean it comes, and streams in upon the waking creation. Each morning that signal light, calling to action, is at thy window; duly it cometh, as with a message, saying, "Awake, arise!" Thou wakest—from dreamy slumbers, from helpless inactivity—and what dost thou find? Hast thou lost anything of thyself in that

slumber of forgetfulness? Hath not all been kept for thee? Hath there not been a watch over thy sleep? Thou wakest; and each limb is filled with life; each sense holds its station in thy wonderful frame; each faculty, each thought is in its place; no dark insanity, no dreary eclipse, hath spread itself over thy soul. What shall the thoughts of that hour be, but wondering and adoring thoughts? Well are a portion of our prayers called *matins*. Morning prayers—morning prayers—orisons in the first light of day, from the bended soul, if not from the bended knee—were not the morning desecrated and denied, if a part and portion of it were not prayer?

And there is a sentiment of the eventide—when the sun slowly sinks from our sight—when the shadows steal over the earth—when the shining hosts of the stars come forth—when other worlds and other regions of the universe are unveiled in the infinitude of heaven. Then, to meditate, how reasonable—I had almost said how inevitable is it! How meet were it then, that in every house there should be a vesper hymn! I have read of such a scene in a village, in some country—I think it was in Italy—where the traveller heard, as the day went down, and amidst the gathering shadows of the still evening, first from one dwelling, and then from another, the voices of song—accompanied with simple instruments, flute and flageolet—it was the vesper hymn. How beautiful were it, in village or city, for dwelling thus to call to dwelling, saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty—just and true are thy ways, God of the morning! God of the evening! we praise thee; goodness and mercy hast thou caused to follow us all our days."

Thus have I attempted to show that religion is the great sentiment of life. It is our life. Our life is bound up with it, and in it; and without it, life would be both miserable and ignoble.

I will only add in fine, that religion alone offers to us the hope of a future life, and that without this, our present being is shorn of all its grandeur and hope.

Whether we look at our own death or at the death of others, this consideration, this necessity of a faith that takes hold of eternity, presses upon us. I know very well what the common and worldly consolation is. I know very well, the hackneyed proverb, that "time is the curer of grief;" but I know very well too, that no time can suppress the sigh that is given to the loved and lost. Time, indeed, lightens the constant pressure of grief rather than blunts its edge: and still more than either, perhaps, does it smooth over the outward aspect of that suffering: but often, when all is outwardly calm and even bright, does the conscious heart say, "I hear a voice you cannot hear; I see a sign you cannot see;" and it pays the sad and dear tribute of bereaved love. No; the memory of the beloved ones parts not from us, as its shadow passes from our countenance. And who is there, around whose path such memories linger, that will not say, "I thank God, through our Lord Jesus Christ," through him who is the revealed "resurrection and life;" through him who said, "He that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die"? For now, blessed be God, we mourn not as those who have no hope. But surely, dying creatures as we are, and living in a dying world, if in this life only we had hope, we should, of all beings, be most miserable!

In fine, my view of life is such, that if it were not for my faith and hope, I should very little care what became of it. Let it be longer or shorter, it would but little matter, if all was to end when life ended; if all my hopes and aspirations, and cherished joys, were to be buried with me for ever, in the tomb. Oh! that life of insect cares and pursuits, and of insect brevity—the mind that God has given me could only cast a sad and despairing look upon it, and then dismiss it, as not worth a farther thought. But no such sad and shocking incongruity, is there, thanks be to God, in the well-ordered course of our being. The harmonies that are all around us, in all animal, in all vegetable life—in light and shade, in mountain and valley, in ocean and stream, in the linked train of the seasons, in the moving and dread array of all the heavenly hosts of worlds—the harmonies of universal nature, but above all, the teachings of the Gospel, assure us that no such shocking incongruity and disorder are bound up in the frame of our nature.

No; it is true; that which we so much need to support us is true; *God doth look down upon our humble path with the eye of paternal wisdom and love; this universe is full of spiritual influences to help us in the great conflict of life; there is a world beyond in which we may assuredly trust.* The heart full of weighty interests and cares, of swelling hopes and aspirations, of thoughts too big for utterance, is not given us merely that we may bear it to the grave, and bury it there. From that sleeping dust shall rise the freed spirit, to endless life. Thanks—let us again say, and for ever say—thanks be to God who giveth us this victory of an assured hope, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

ON THE RELIGION OF LIFE.

ECCLESIASTES iii. 11: "He hath made everything beautiful in its time."

IN my last discourse on human life, I spoke of religion as the great, appropriate, and pervading sentiment of life. *The religion of life*—by which I mean a different thing—the religion, the sanctity, the real, spiritual consecration naturally and properly belonging to all the appointed occupations, cultivated arts, lawful amusements, and social bonds of life; this is the subject of my present discourse.

By most religious systems, this life—the life, that is, which the world is leading and has been leading through ages—is laid under a dark and fearful ban. "*No religion*"—is the summary phrase which is written upon almost its entire history. Though it is held by these very systems, that the world was made for religion—made, that is to say, for the culture of religion in the hearts of its inhabitants—yet it is contended that this purpose has been almost entirely frustrated.

First, the heathen nations, by this theory, are cut off from all connexion with real religion. Next, upon the mass of Christian nations, as being unregenerate and utterly depraved, the same sentence is passed. I am not disposed, on this subject, to exact the full measure of inference from any mere theory. Men's actual views are often in advance of their creeds. But is it not very evident—as a third consideration—that the prevailing views of the world's life very well agree with the prevailing creeds? Is it not the common feeling that mankind in the mass—in the proportion of thousands to one—have failed to attain to anything of true religion; to any, the least of that which fulfils the real and great design of the Creator? Is it not commonly felt that the mass of men's pursuits, of their occupations, of their pleasures, is completely severed from this great purpose? In labour, in merchandise, in the practice of law and of medicine, in literature, in sculpture, painting, poetry, music, is it not the constant doctrine or implication of the pulpit, that there is no religion, no spiritual virtue, nothing accordant with the Gospel of Christ? Men, amidst their pursuits, may *attain* to a divine life; but are not the pursuits themselves regarded as having nothing, strictly speaking, to do with such a life—as having in them no elements of spiritual good—as having in them no tendency to advance religion and goodness in the world?

This certainly, upon the face of it, is a very extraordinary assumption. The pursuits in question are—some of them necessary; others useful; and all, natural; that is to say, they are developments, and inevitable and predestined developments, of the nature which God has given us. And yet it is maintained and believed, that they have no tendency to

promote his great design in making the world; that they have nothing in them allied to his purpose; that, at the most, they are only compatible with it, and that the actual office which they discharge in the world, is to lead men away from it. The whole, heaven-ordained activity, occupation, care, ingenuity of human life, is at war with its great purpose. And if one would seek the welfare of his soul, he is advised to leave all—the farmer, his plough—the merchant, his ships—the lawyer, his briefs—and the painter, his easel; and to go to a revival-meeting or a confessional, or to retire to his closet. I need not say that I am not here objecting to meditation—to distinct, thoughtful, and solemn meditation—as one of the means of piety and virtue; but I do protest against this ban and exclusion, which are thus virtually laid upon the beneficent and religious instrumentalities of a wise and gracious Providence.

On the contrary, I maintain that everything is beautiful in its time—in its place—in its appointed office; that everything which man is put to do, naturally helps to work out his salvation; in other words, that if he obey the genuine principles of his calling, he will be a good man; and that it is only through disobedience to the heaven-appointed tasks, either by wandering into idle dissipation, or by violating their beneficent and lofty spirit, that he becomes a bad man. Yes, if man would yield himself to the great training of Providence in the appointed action of life, we should not need churches nor ordinances; though they might still be proper for the *expression* of religious homage and gratitude.

Let us then look at this action of life, and attempt to see what is involved in it, and whether it is all alien, as is commonly supposed, to the spirit of sacred truth and virtue.

I. And the first sphere of visible activity which presents itself, is labour—the business of life, as opposed to what is commonly called study. I have before spoken of the moral ministration of labour; but let us, in connexion with this subject, advert to it again.

My subject in this discourse is the religion of life; and I now say that there is a religion of toil. It is not all drudgery—a mere stretching of the limbs and straining of the sinews to tasks. It has a meaning. It has an intent. A living heart pours life-blood into the toiling arm. Warm affections mingle with weary tasks. I say not how pure those affections are, or how much of imperfection may mix with them, but I say that they are of a class, held by all men to be venerable and dear; that they partake of a kind of natural sanctity. They are, in other words, the home affections. The labour that spreads itself over tilled acres, all points for its centre, to the country farm-house. The labour that plies its task in busy cities, has the same central point, and thither it brings daily supplies. And when I see the weary hand bearing that nightly offering; when I see the toiling days-man, carrying to his home the means of support and comfort; that offering is sacred to my thought, as a sacrifice at a golden shrine. Alas! many faults there are, amidst the toils of life—many hasty and harsh words are spoken; but why do those toils go on at all?—why are they not given up entirely—weary and hard and exasperating as they often are? Because in that home is sickness, or age, or protected though helping woman, to be provided for. Because that there, is helpless infancy or gentle childhood, that must not want.

Such are the labours of life; and though it is true that mere selfishness, mere solitary need, would prompt to irregular and occasional exertion, or would push some ambitious persons, of covetous desires, to continued and persevering effort, yet I am persuaded, that the selfish impulses would never create that scene of labour which we behold around us.

Let us next look at the studious professions.

And I must confess that I have often been struck with surprise that a physician could be an undevout man. His study—the human frame—is the most wonderful display of divine wisdom in the world, the most astonishing proof of contrivance, of providence. Fearfully and wonderfully is it made; and if he who contemplates it, is not a reverent and heaven-adoring man, he is false to the very study that he calls his own. He reads a page, folded from the eyes of most men—a page of wondrous hieroglyphics—that handwriting of nerves, and sinews, and arteries; darkly he reads it, with a feeling enforced upon him that there is a wisdom above and beyond him; and if he is not a religiously inquiring and humble man, it seems to me that he knows not what he reads. Then again, it is his office to visit scenes, where he is most especially taught the frailty of life, the impotence of man, and the need of a divine helper; where the strong man is bowed down by an invisible blow, to debility, to delirium, to utter helplessness; where the dying stretch out their hands to heaven for aid, and to immortality for a reliance; where affliction, smitten to the dust and stript of all earthly supports, plainly declares that no sufficient resource is left for it, but Almighty Goodness. I do not say, that there is anything in the physician's calling which necessarily makes him a religious and good man; but I do say, that if he obeys the true spirit of his calling, he must be led to the formation of such a character, as the inevitable result.

Turn next to the vocation of the lawyer—and what is it? It is to contribute his aid to the establishment and vindication of justice in the world. But what is justice? It is rectitude, righteousness. It is the right between man and man; and as an absolute quality, it is the high attribute of God. The lawyer may fall below this aim and view of his vocation, but that is not the fault of his vocation. His vocation is most moral, most religious; it connects him, most emphatically, with God; he is the minister of Almighty justice. In the strictest construction of things, the clergyman is not more truly God's minister than he is. I know that the prevailing view is a different one. I know that the world looks upon this profession as altogether irreligious or altogether unreligious at the best. To say that the lawyer, however legitimately employed, is most religiously employed, sounds in most ears like mockery, I suppose. But let us look at his function, and let us put it in the most doubtful light. He goes up to the court of justice to plead the cause of his client. All the day long he is engaged with examining witnesses, sifting evidence, and wrangling, if you please, for points of evidence, and construction, and law. He may commit mistakes, no doubt. He may err, in temper or in judgment. But suppose that his leading aim, his wish, is to obtain justice. And it is a very supposable thing, even though he be on the wrong side. He goes into the case, and he goes up to the court, not knowing what the right is—what the evidence is,

strenuously handles and sifts the evidence, to help on towards the right conclusion. Or if you say it is to help his view of the case, still his function ministers to the same thing. For the conclusion is not committed to him; it lies with the judge and the jury; his office is ministerial; and he is to put forward every fair point on his side, as his opponent will on the other side, because these are the very means—nay, the indispensable means, for coming to a righteous decision. And I say, that if he does this fairly and honestly, with a feeling of true self-respect, honour, and conscience—with a feeling that God's justice reigns in that high tribunal,—then he is acting a religious part; he is leading, that day, a religious life. If righteousness, if justice is any part of religion, he is doing so. No matter whether, during all that day, he has once appealed in form, or in terms, to his conscience or not; no matter whether he has once spoken of religion and of God, or not; if there has been the inward appeal, the inward purpose—the conscious intent and desire that justice, sacred justice, should triumph, he has that day led a good and religious life: and certainly, he has been making a most essential contribution to that religion of life and of society—the cause of equity between man and man—of truth and righteousness in the world.

There are certain other pursuits, of an intellectual character, which require to be noticed in this connexion—those, I mean, of literature and the arts. And the question here, let it be borne in mind, is not whether these pursuits are always conducted upon the highest principles; but whether they are, in their proper nature, and in their justest and highest character, religious and good; whether, between these functions and religion there is any natural affinity; whether or not, in their legitimate tendency, they are helping to work out the world's salvation from vice, and sin, and spiritual misery. And certainly, to him who is looking with any anxiety to the great moral end of providence, this is a very serious question. For in these forms—of literature and art—the highest genius of the world is usually revealed. The cost of time and money to which they put the world, is not a small consideration. The laboured works of art, and the means lavished to obtain them; the writing, printing, selling, and reading of books; all this presents one of the grandest features of our modern civilization. But the cost of mental labour is more than this; it is of the very life-blood of the world. This great power *of communication with men*, is not only working, and putting in requisition much of the labour and time of the world, but it is often working painfully, and is wasting the noblest strength in its strenuous toils. In silent and solitary places genius is often found consuming away in the fires which it has kindled. And now the question is—on what altars are these priceless offerings laid?

Let it be considered, then, in answer to this question, how few statues, paintings, or books, have any bad design. Point me to one in an hundred—to one in a thousand, or ten thousand—that recommends vice. What, then, do they inculcate? Surely it is virtue, sanctity, the grandeur of the spiritual part of man. What do we see in these works? It is in sculpture, the fearful beauty of the God of light, or the severe majesty of the Hebrew lawgiver, or the solemn dignity of the Christ. It is in painting, some form of moral loveliness, some saint in the rapture of devotion—or a Christian, constant, serene, forgiving,

victorious in the agonies of martyrdom. It is in writing—in fiction, in poetry, in the drama—some actor or sufferer, nobly sustaining himself amidst temptations, difficulties, conflicts, and sorrows—holding on his bright career through clouds and storms, to the goal of virtue and of heaven! Of course, I do not say that there are no moral defects in these representations; but most certain it is, nevertheless, that the highest literature and art of every age, embody its highest spiritual ideal of excellence. And even when we descend from their higher manifestations, and find them simply amusing, there is nothing in this that is *hostile* to religion. Men must have recreation; and literature and art furnish that which is most pure, innocent, and refining. They are already drawing away multitudes from coarser indulgences, and from places of low and vile resort. And the theatre, were it purged from certain offensive appendages, might be one of the most admirable ministrations conceivable, to the recreation and entertainment of the people. Nay, a great actor—as well as a great dramatist—in the legitimate walk of his art, may be a most effective and tremendous preacher of virtue to the people.

But, to go again to the main point, I must strenuously maintain, that books—to be of religious tendency—to be ministers to the general piety and virtue—need not be books of sermons, nor books of pious exercises, nor books of prayers. These all have their great and good office to discharge: but *whatever* inculcates pure sentiment—whatever touches the heart with the beauty of virtue, and the blessedness of piety, is in accordance with religion; and this is the Gospel of literature and art. Yes, and it is preached from many a wall, it is preached from many a book—ay, from many a poem, and fiction, and review, and newspaper; and it would be a painful error, and a miserable narrowness, not to recognise these wide-spread agencies of heaven's providing—not to see and welcome these many-handed coadjutors to the great and good cause. Christianity has, in fact, poured a measure of its own spirit into these forms; and not to recognise it there, is to deny its own specific character and claim. There are religious books, indeed, which may be compared to the solid gold of Christianity; but many of its fairest gems have their setting in literature and art; and if it is a pitiable blindness not to see its beautiful spirit, even when it is surrounded by ignorance and poverty, what must it be not to recognise it when it is set in the richest framework that human genius, imagination, and art, can devise for it?

There is one of the arts of expression which I have not mentioned—which sometimes seems to me a finer breathing out of the soul than any other, and which certainly breathes a more immediate and inspiring tone into the heart of the world than any other—I mean music. Eloquent writing is great; eloquent speaking is greater; but an impromptu burst of song, or strain of music, like one of old Beethoven's voluntaries, I am inclined to say, is something greater. And now, when this wonderful power spreads around its spell, almost like inspiration; when, celebrating heroism, magnanimity, pity, or pure love, it touches the heart with rapture, and fills the eye with tears, is it to be accounted among things profane or irreligious? Must it be heard in church to be made a holy thing? Must the words of its soul-thrilling utterance be the technical words of religion—grace, godliness, righteousness—in order to mean

anything divine? No; the vocation of the really great singer, breathing inspirations of truth and tenderness into the mind, is as holy as the vocation of the great preacher. In our dwellings, and in concert-rooms, ay, and in opera-houses—so the theme be pure and great—there is *preaching*, as truly as within church walls.

My brethren, give me your patience—if I must suppose that what I am saying needs it. Do but consider what the great arts of mental and moral communication express. Are they not oftentimes the very same qualities that you revere in religion? Are goodness, pity, magnanimous self-sacrifice, and heroic virtue, less divine, because they are expressed in literature, in painting, or in song? And when you are moved to admiration, to tears, at some great example of heroism or self-sacrifice—be it by music, or dramatic representation—and when the same thing moves you in preaching—are you entirely to distinguish between the cases, and to say that the one feeling is profane, and the other holy?

Observe, that I do not ask you to revere religion less, but to see and to welcome new, and perhaps before unthought of, instruments and agencies in the great field. You fear, perhaps, that they are not altogether pure. Then, I say, cut off, and cast away, the bad part; I plead not for that, but none the less accept the good. Nay, and I might ask, Is religious teaching itself all pure—all right? Indeed, I think that religion and religious teaching have been as much perverted and abused as labour, literature, or art.

It is every way most injurious and unjust to brand everything as irreligious that is not specifically devoted to religion; to deny, and as it were, to forbid, to work any good work, those who "follow not after us." Our Saviour rebuked his disciples in such a case; saying, forbid them not—"he that is not against me is for me." It is a bigotry totally unworthy of the generous and glorious Gospel, to hold in utter distrust and desecration all the beneficent activities of the world, all its kindly affections, all the high purposes and sentiments that live both in its physical and mental toils, because they do not come within the narrow pale of a technical religion; because they are not embraced in the mystic secret of what is called *religious experience*. All men are experiencing, more or less, what the Christian is experiencing. If his experience is higher and more perfect, is that a reason why he shall disdain and reject everything that is like it in others? As well might the sage, the philosopher, repudiate and scorn all the common sense and knowledge of the world. If he does so, we call him a bigoted and scholastic philosopher. And if the Christian does so, we must call him a bigoted and mystic Christian. And, let me add, that if he were a generous and lofty-minded Christian, I cannot conceive what could be more distressing and mournful to him, than to hold all human existence, with the exception of his little peculiarity, to be a dark and desolate waste—to see all beside, as a gloomy mass of ignorance, error, sin, and sorrow. It is the reproduction, on Christian ground, of the old Jewish exclusion and bigotry.

II. Let us now extend our view to another department of human life—recreation; and let us see whether we cannot embrace this within the great bond of religion; whether we cannot reclaim another lost territory to the highest service of man.

The isles of refreshment; the gardens and bowers of recreation; the

play-grounds for sport; somewhere must they lie embosomed in this great world of labour; for man *cannot* always toil. Place for mirth and gaiety, and wit, and laughter—somewhere must it be found; for God hath made our nature to develop these very things. Is not this sufficient to vindicate the claim of recreation to be part of a good and religious life?

But let us look at the matter in another light. Suppose the world of men were created—and created in full maturity—but yesterday; and suppose it to be a world of beings, religious, devout, and devoutly grateful and good. The first employment that engages it, as a matter of necessity, and of evident appointment too, is labour. But after some days or weeks of toil, it becomes acquainted with a new fact. It finds that incessant toil is impracticable; that it is breaking down both mind and body; in fact, that neither body nor mind was made for it. In short, the necessity of recreation becomes manifest. What then, under this view of the case, would men do? Social, and socially inclined, especially in their lighter engagements, would they not very naturally say, "Let us devise games and sports; let us have music and dancing; let us listen to amusing recitations, or dramatic stories of life's gaiety or grandeur; and let us obey these tendencies and wants of our nature, in ever-kept, grateful veneration and love of him who has made us." And if all this were followed out in primeval innocence, with a religious devoutness and gratitude, I suppose that every objection to it would be removed from the minds of the most scrupulous.

The objection, then, lies against the abuse of these things. But what is the proper moral business of such an objection? Is it to extirpate the things in question? It cannot. Games, gaieties—sports, spectacles, there will be, as long as men have limbs, or eyes, or ears. It is no factitious choice which the world has made of its amusements. It chose them because it wanted them. The development here, is as natural as it is in the arts. You might as well talk of extirpating music and painting, as of driving the common amusements out of the world. Shall the religious objection then, since it cannot destroy, proceed to vilify these amusements? What! vilify an ordinance of nature, a necessity of man, a thing that cannot be helped! Is this the wisdom of religion—to degrade what it cannot destroy; to make of that which it cannot prevent, the worst that can be made; to banish alike from its protection and remedy, that which it cannot banish from the world? There lies the garden of recreation, close by the field of labour! and they cannot be severed; and men must and will pass from one to the other; and is it the office of religion to curse that garden, to pronounce it unholy ground, and so to give it up to utter levity or license? Nay, can anything be plainer than that it is the business of religion to *reform* the amusements of the day? Reform, I believe, is the only measure that can be taken with the theatre; for that which has its root in the natural tastes, customs, and literature, of all civilized ages, is not likely to be eradicated. But how is anything to be reformed? By invective, by opprobrium, by heaping contempt upon it? By casting it out from the pale of good influences, by withdrawing good men from all contact with it, by consigning it over to the irreligion, frivolity, and self-indulgence of the world? Surely not. And therefore am I anxious to show that recreation must come within the plan of good

life, and hence to show that it is not to be snatched as a forbidden pleasure; not to be distorted by the hand of reckless license; but to be welcomed, ay, and consecrated, by calm, conscientious, rational enjoyment.

The objection I am considering, is, that the common and chosen recreations of the world are abused. If they were pure and innocent, it would have nothing to say. But what is *not* abused? Is not business—is not religion itself abused? Are they therefore to be denounced and driven away from the sight of man? The objection carried out, would reduce the whole world to dead silence and inaction. But this cannot be tolerated. We must work; and we must do business; and we must relax into gaiety and sportiveness when our work is done. Improvements may be introduced into each sphere of action, and have been all along, through ages; but the sphere must remain; and it must remain essentially the same. You can no more get men to amuse themselves in some entirely new manner, than you can get them to do business, or to draw deeds, or to labour upon the arts, in some entirely new manner. I tell the ascetic religionist that there *will* be gaiety and laughter—there *will* be assemblies, and music, and dancing—ay, and, as I think, cards and theatres, as long as the world stands. Whether *he* like it or not—whether *I* like it or not,—it cannot be helped.

Now there are abuses of these things. What are we to say of the abuses? "Let them crush down and destroy the things themselves"—do we say? But they cannot. Then let them be cut off. There is really nothing else to be done. Elevate, refine, purify the public amusements. Let religion recognise and restrain them. Let it not, as is too common, drive them to license and extravagance; but let it throw around them its gentle and holy bonds, to make them pure, cheerful, healthful—helpful to the great ends of life. What a blessed thing for the world were it, if its amusements could thus be rescued, redeemed, and brought into the service of its virtue and piety! What a blessed thing for the weary world, for the youthful world, for the joyous world, if the steps of its recreation, trodden in cheerful innocence and devout gratitude, could be ever leading it to heaven!

I have now considered two great departments of life; labour, physical and mental—and recreation. My design has been, to rescue them from the common imputation of being necessarily or altogether worldly or irreligious; to resist the prevailing notion, that all true religion, all true spiritual goodness, is gathered up in certain and (so-called) sacred professions, peculiarities, and places; to show that in all the heaven-ordained pursuits and conditions of life, there are elements of good; that the spirit of God is breathing its gracious influence through the world; that there is a religion of life, unrecognised in our ordinary religious systems, but real and true, and either worthy of our welcome and admiration, or when defective or wrong, worthy of our endeavour to correct and improve it.

III. But, once more, there is a religion of society.

This topic, let me observe, is essentially distinct from those which I have already discussed. It is true that our labour and recreation are mostly social; but in the social bond there is something more than the business or the amusement which takes advantage of it. It has a

holiness, a grandeur, a sweetness of its own. The world, indeed, is encircled by that bond; and what is it? In business, there is something more than barter, exchange, price, payment; there is a sacred faith of man in man. When you know one in whose integrity you repose perfect confidence; when you feel that he will not swerve from conscience for any temptation,—*that* integrity, that conscience is the image of God to you; and when you believe in it, it is as generous and great an act, as if you believed in the rectitude of heaven. In gay assemblies for amusement again—not instruments of music, not rich apparel, not sumptuous entertainments, are the chief things; but the gushing and mingling affections of life. I know what is said, and may be truly said, of selfishness, and pride, and envy, in these scenes; but I know too, that good affections go up to these gathering places, or they would be as desolate as the spoil-clad caves and dens of thieves and robbers. Look at two kind-hearted acquaintances meeting in those places, or meeting in the market or on the exchange; and see the warm pressure of the hand, the kindling of the eye, the suffusion of the whole countenance with heartfelt gladness; and tell me if there is not a *religion* between those hearts—a true love and worshipping, in each other, of the true and good. It is not policy that spreads such a charm around that meeting, but the halo of bright and beautiful affection. It hangs like the soft enfolding sky, over all the world, over all places where men meet, and toil or walk together—not over lovers' bowers and marriage altars alone—not over the homes of purity and tenderness alone; yet these are in the world—but over all tilled fields, and busy workshops, and dusty highways, and paved streets. There is not a trodden stone upon these side-walks, but it has been an altar for such offerings of mutual kindness. There is not a wooden pillar nor an iron railing, against which throbbing hearts have not leaned. True, there are other elements in the stream of life, that is flowing through these channels. But will any one dare to deny that *this* element is here and everywhere—honest, heartfelt, disinterested, inexpressible affection. If he dare, let him do so, and then confess that he is a brute or a fiend, and not a man. But if this element is here—is everywhere, what is it?

To answer this question, let us ask, what is God? And the apostle answers, "God is love." And is not this, of which we have been speaking, love—true, pure love? Deny it, and bear upon your head the indignation of all mankind. But admit it; and what do you admit? That God's love is poured into human hearts. Yes, into human hearts! Oh! sad, sad—frail, erring, broken, are they often; yet God's spirit is breathing through them—else were they despoiled, desolate, crushed, beyond recovery, beyond hope. It is that same spirit of love that enshrines the earth and enrobes the heavens with beauty; and if there were not an eye of love to see it, a heart of love to feel it, all nature would be the desolate abode of creatures as desolate.

I know full well, alas! that there are other things in life besides love. I know that in city streets, not far removed from us, are depths beneath depths of sorrow and sin; that in cellars beneath cellars, and in stories above stories, are crowded together poverty, and wretchedness, and filth, and vileness. Oh! desolate and dreary abodes—where, through the long bright day, only want, and toil, and sorrow knock at

all your gates—only blows of passion, and shrieks of children, and cursings of drunkenness, and oaths of the profane, measure out the heavy hours!—Are there no hearts to bleed for you? Are there no energies of love to interpose for you? Shall the stream of glad and prosperous life flow so near you, and *never* come to cleanse out your impurities, and heal your miseries? Nay, in that stream of glad and joyous life, I know that there are ingredients of evil—the very ingredients indeed that prevent a consummation so blessed. I know, that amidst gay equipages, selfishness is born; and that amidst luxurious entertainments, pride is nursed, and sensuality gorged; and that through fair and fair-seeming assemblies, envy steals, and hatred and revenge spread their wiles; and that many a bad passion casts its shade over the brightest atmosphere of social life. All this I know. I do not refuse to see the evil that is in life. But tell me not that all is evil. I still see God in the world. I see good amidst the evil. I see the hand of mercy often guiding the chariot of wealth to the abodes of poverty and sorrow. I see truth and simplicity amidst many wiles and sophistries. There is a habit of berating fashionable life, which is often founded more in ignorance than ill-will. Those who know better, know that there is good everywhere. I see good hearts beneath gay robes—ay, and beneath tattered robes, too. I see love clasping the hand of love, amidst all the envyings and distortions of showy competition; and I see fidelity, piety, sympathy, holding the long night-watch by the bed-side of a suffering neighbour, amidst all-surrounding poverty and misery. God bless the kindly office, the pitying thought, the loving heart, wherever it is—and it is everywhere!

Why, my brethren, do I insist upon this? Why do I endeavour to spread life before you in a new light—in a light, not recognised by most of our religious systems? I will endeavour in few words to tell you.

I am made to be affected, in many respects, by the consciousness of what is passing around me, but especially in my happiness and my improvement. I am more than an inhabitant of the world; I am a sympathising member of the great human community. Its condition comes as a blessing, or weighs as a burthen upon my single thought. It is a discouragement or an excitement, to all that is good and happy within me. If I dwell in this world as in a prison; if the higher faith, the religion of my being, compels me to regard it in this light; if all its employments are prison employments, mere penal tasks or drudgeries to keep its tenants out of mischief; if all its ingenious handicrafts are but prison arts and contrivances to while away the time; if all its relations are prison relations, relations of dislike or selfishness, or of compact and cunning in evil,—if the world is such a place, it must be a gloomy and unholy place, a dark abode, a wilderness world; yes, though its walls were built of massive gold, and its dome were spread with sapphire, and studded with diamond stars, I must look upon it with sadness—I must look upon its inhabitants with coldness, distrust, and disdain. It is a picture which I have drawn; but it is mainly a picture of the world as viewed by the prevailing religion of our time. Nay more; from this prison, it seems that thousands are daily carried to execution—plunged into a lake of fire—there to burn for ever. And if the belief of its votaries actually came up to its creed, gaiety and joyousness in such a world would be more misplaced and

shocking a thousand times, than they would be in the gloomiest penitentiary that ever was builded. Is this fair and bright world—is God's world—such a place? If it is, I am sure that it was not made for any rational and reflective happiness; but mountain to mountain, and continent to continent, and age to age, should echo nothing but sighs and groans.

But, if this world, instead of being a prison, is a school; if all its appointed tasks are teachings; if all its ordained employments are fit means for improvement, and all its proper amusements are the good recreations of virtuous toil and endeavour; if, however perverse and sinful men are, there is an element of good in all their lawful pursuits, and a diviner breathing in all their lawful affections; if the ground whereon they tread is holy ground; if there is a natural religion of life, answering, with however many a broken tone, to the religion of nature; if there is a beauty and glory of humanity, answering, with however many a mingled shade, to the loveliness of soft landscapes and embosoming hills, and the overhanging glory of the deep, blue heavens—then all is changed. And it is changed not more for happiness than it is for virtue.

For then do men find that they may be virtuous, improving, religious, *in* their employments—that this is precisely what their employments were made for. Then will they find that all their social relations—friendship, love, family ties—were made to be holy. Then will they find that they may be religious, not by a kind of protest and resistance against their several vocations, but by conformity to their true spirit; that their vocations do not exclude religion, but demand it for their own perfection; that they may be religious labourers, whether in field or factory — religious physicians and lawyers — religious sculptors, painters, and musicians; that they may be religious in all the toils and amusements of life; that their life may be a religion; the broad earth its altar—its incense, the very breath of life—and its fires kindled, ever kindled, by the brightness of heaven.

ON THE IDENTITY OF RELIGION WITH GOODNESS, AND WITH A GOOD LIFE.

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1 John iv. 24: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

If there is any mission for the true teacher to accomplish in this age, it is to identify religion with goodness; to show that they are the same thing—manifestations, that is to say, of the same principle,—to show, in other words, and according to the apostle, that no man is to be accounted a lover of God, who is not a lover of his brother. It is—I say again—to identify religion with morals, religion with virtue; with justice, truth, integrity, honesty, generosity, disinterestedness—religion with the highest beauty and loveliness of character. This, I repeat, is the great mission and message of the true teacher to-day. What it may be some other day—what transcendental thing may be waiting to be taught, I do not know; but this I conceive is the practical business of religious instruction now. Let me not be misunderstood, as if I were supposed to say that this or any other mere doctrine, were the *ultimate end* of preaching. *That is*, to make men holy. But how shall any preaching avail to make men holy, unless it do rightly and clearly teach them what it *is* to be holy? If they mistake here, all their labour to be religious, all their hearing of the word, Sabbath-keeping, praying, and striving, will be in vain. And therefore I hold that to teach this, and especially to show that religion is not something else than a good heart, but is that very thing—this, I say, is the burden of the present time.

I use now an old prophetic phrase, and I may remark here, that every time has its burden. In the times of the Old Testament, the burden of teaching was, to assert the supremacy and spirituality of God, in opposition to idolatry. In the Christian time, it was to set forth that universal and impartial, and that most real and true love which God has for his earthly creatures, in opposition to Jewish peculiarity, and Pagan indifference, and all human distrust—a love, declared by one who came from the bosom of the Father, sealed in his blood, and thus bringing nigh to God, a guilty, estranged, and unbelieving world. The burden of the Reformation time was to assert the freedom of religion; to bring it out from the bondage of human authority into the sanctuary of private judgment and sacred conscience. But now,

religion having escaped from Pagan idolatry, and Jewish exclusion, and papal bondage, and survived many a controversy since, has encountered a deeper question concerning its own nature. What especially is religion itself? This, I say, is the great question of the present day. It underlies all our controversies. It is that which gives the main interest to every controversy. For whether the controversy be about forms or creeds, the vital question is, whether this or that ritual or doctrine ministers essentially to true religion; so that if a man embraces some other system, he is fatally deficient of the vital means of salvation. And this brings us to the question, what is true religion itself?

This question, as I have intimated, presses mainly upon a single point, which I will now state, and argue as a contested point: viz. whether religion, in its essence, consists in a principle of rectitude, of goodness, in a simple and true love of the true and divine, or whether it consists in something else; or in other words—whether it consists in certain intelligible affections, or in something, to the mass of men, unknown and unintelligible.

This question craves some explanation, both that you may understand what it is, and may perceive that it is a question; and I must bespeak your patience.

In entering upon these points, let us consider, in the first place, what is the ground on which the general assertion in our text proceeds.

There is, then, but one true principle in the mind, and that is the love of the true, the right, the holy. There is but one character of the soul, to which God has given his approbation, and with which he has connected the certainty of happiness here and hereafter. There is something in the soul which is made the condition of its salvation; and that something is one thing, though it has many forms. It is sometimes called grace in the heart, sometimes holiness, righteousness, conformity to the character of God; but the term for it, most familiar in popular use, is religion. The constant question is, when a man's spiritual safety or well-being is the point for consideration—when he is going to die, and men would know whether he is to be happy hereafter—has he got religion? or, has he been a religious man? I must confess that I do not like this use of the term. I am accustomed to consider religion as reverence and love towards God; and to consider it, therefore, as only one part of rectitude or excellence.

But you know that it commonly stands for the whole of that character which God requires of us. Now what I am saying is, that this character is, in principle, *one thing*. It is, being right; and being right is but one thing. It has many forms; but only one essence. It may be the love of God, and then it is piety. It may be the love of men, and then it is philanthropy. But the love of God, and the love of man as bearing his image, are in essence the same thing. Or to discriminate with regard to this second table of the law; it may be a love of men's happiness, and then it is the very image of God's benevolence; or it may be the love of holiness in men, of their goodness, justice, truth, virtue, and then it is a love of the same things that form, when infinitely exalted, the character of God. All these forms of excellence, if they cannot be resolved into one principle, are certainly parts of one great consciousness, the consciousness of right; they at any rate have

the strictest alliance; they are inseparably bound together as parts of one whole; the very nature of true excellence in one form is a pledge for its existence in every other form. He who has the right principle in him is a lover of God, and a lover of good men, and a lover of all goodness and purity, and a labourer for the happiness of all around him. The tree is one, though the branches, and the leaves, and the blossoms be many and various; all spring from one vital germ; so that the apostle, in our text, will not allow it to be said, that a man is a lover of God, who does not love his brethren of the human family.

Now it may surprise you, at first, to hear it asserted, that this apparently reasonable account of the matter does not accord with the popular judgment. To this point of explanation, therefore, I must invite your attention, lest I seem to fight as one that beateth the air.

It is true, then, that it is admitted in general, that the Christian, the object of God's favour here and hereafter, must be a good man—a just, honest, pure, benevolent man. These admissions are general and vague. We must penetrate into this matter, with some more discriminating inquiry. What is it, specifically, that makes a man spiritually a Christian, and entitles him to hope for future happiness? The common answer is,—it is religion, it is piety, it is grace in the heart, it is being converted, it is being in Christ, and being a new creature. These phrases I might comment upon, if I had time, and I might show that they have a very true and just meaning. But what is the meaning that they actually convey to most hearers? What is this inmost and saving principle of religion—this grace or godliness—this spirit of the regenerated man? Is it not something peculiar to the regenerate—not something *more* of goodness in them than in other men, but something different in them from goodness in others? Is it not something possessed by them alone, unshared by the rest of the world; unknown, completely unknown, and, in fact, inconceivable to the great body of mankind! Are not the saints—God's people, as they are called—supposed to have some secret of experience wrapped up in them, with which the stranger intermeddleth not—of which the world knoweth nothing? I do not wish to have this so understood, if it is not true. But if it is true, it is too serious a point to be tampered with, or treated with any fastidious delicacy: I say, then, plainly and earnestly, is it not true? If you ask most men around you what is that gracious state of the heart which is produced by the act of regeneration, will they not say that they do not *know?* And all that they can say about it—provided they have any serious thoughts—will it not be this—that they hope they *shall* know some time or other? But they know what truth, kindness, honesty, self-denial, disinterestedness are. They know, or suppose that they know, what penitence, sorrow for doing wrong is. Gratitude to God, also—the love of God—they deem is no enigma to them. They certainly have some idea of these qualities. I do not say *how much, by experience*, they know of all these things; but I say they have some idea of what these things mean. If, then, they are told, and if they believe, that all this does not reach to the true idea of religion, it follows, that religion must be, in their account, some enigma or mystery—it is some inconceivable effect of divine grace, or moving of gracious affections in the heart; it must be something different from all that men are wont to call goodness, excellence, loveliness.

But to make this still plainer, if need be; what, let it be asked, are most men looking for and desiring, when they seek religion? In a revival of religion, as it is termed, what is the anxious man seeking? Is it not something as completely strange and foreign to his ordinary experience, as would be the effect of the mystery called animal magnetism? A man is declining into the vale of years, or he is lying upon the bed of death, and he wants religion—wants that something which will prepare him for a happy hereafter. He has got beyond the idea that the priest can save him, or that extreme unction can save him, or that any outward rite can save him. He knows that it must be something in his own soul. And now, what shall it be? What does he set himself to do, or to seek? What is the point about which his anxious desires are hovering?" "Oh! that that *thing* could be wrought in me, on which all depends! I know not what it is; but I want it; I pray for it." And this something that is to be done in him, is something that can be done in a moment? Can anything be plainer, then, than this which I am saying—that he is not looking to the increase, and strengthening, and perfection of truth, kindness, disinterestedness, humility, gratitude to God, to save him—not for the increase and strengthening of anything that is already in him; but for the *lodgment* in him of *something new* that will save him. He does not set himself, in seeking religion, about the cultivation of known affections, but about the attainment of unknown affections.

Look again, for further proof, at the language of the popular religion, whether heard from the pulpit, or coming from the press. What is more common than to hear morality decried, and the most lovely virtue disparaged, in comparison with something called grace in the heart? Morality is allowed to be a very good thing for this world, but no preparation for the next; or it is insisted on as a consequence of grace, but is considered as no part of grace itself; or if it is admitted, that by an infusion of grace, morality may become a holy thing, still, by this supposition, the grace maintains its position as the distinct, peculiar, and primal essence of virtue. Observe, that I do not say that anybody preaches against kindness, honesty, and truth-telling, absolutely. Nay, they are insisted on. But in what character? Why, as evidences of that other thing, called religion or grace. They are not that thing, nor any part of it; but only evidences of it. And observe, too, that if it were only said that much that is called morality and kindness is not real morality or kindness; that the ordinary standard of virtue is too low, and needs to be raised,—to that discrimination I should have nothing to object. But the point maintained is, that nothing that is called simple kindness or morality ever comes, or ever can, by any increase, come up to the character of saving virtue.

There is one further and decisive consideration which I am reluctant to mention, but which I will suggest, because it is, first of all, necessary that I should clearly make out the case upon which my discourse proceeds. The church has ever been accustomed to hold that the virtues of heretics are nothing worth. Now suppose a case. Here is a body of men called heretics: Protestants they were once—Church of England men, Puritans, Presbyterians. No age has wanted the instance. Here is a body of men, I say, called heretics. To all human view, they are as amiable, affectionate, and true-hearted—as honest,

diligent, and temperate, as any other people. They profess to reverence religion too; they build churches, meet together for worship; and their worship seems as hearty and earnest as any other. By any standard of judging save that of theology, they appear to be as good and devout men as any other. Now what does the popular theology—what does the pulpit say of them? Why this—briefly and summarily—*that they have no religion.* They may be very good men, very amiable, kind, honest, and true, and after their manner, devout; but they have no religion. Is not the case clear? Must not religion be a secret in the bosom of these confident judges? *They* must know what it is; but others do not know and cannot find out. We must sit down in silence and despair; for we can know nothing about it. Or if we say anything, there is nothing for us but to say with Job, "No doubt, ye are the men, and wisdom shall die with you!" But this, at least, is clear; whatever this religion is of which they speak—whether it consist in a certain belief, or in some secretly imparted grace, it must be something different from all that men generally understand by goodness and devotion.

In short, the prevailing idea of religion is, unquestionably, that it is some heavenly visitant to the soul; some divine guest that takes up its abode there; some essence or effluence, not merely proceeding from God as its cause—which it does—but partaking of unknown attributes; something that comes into the soul from without, and is sustained there by a foreign influence; something that is, at a certain time, created in the heart, and is totally unlike anything that was there before; something that is ingrafted upon our nature, and does not, in any sense, grow out of it; something, in fine, that is put into us, and does not, in any sense, spring out of us—is not *originally* the result of any culture or care of ours—is not wrought out of any materials found in us—not reducible to any ordinary laws of cause and effect; but is the result of a special and supernatural working of divine power, brought to bear upon us. This doctrine, as I have latterly stated it, is undoubtedly modified by some of the New Schools of Theology that are rising around us; and this whole idea of religion is, doubtless, rejected by some orthodox persons; as it was completely rejected in the old English theology of Paley and Bishop Butler: but it is nevertheless very generally taught in this country, and it is the faith, or rather the fear and trouble, of the multitude.

Nor do I know of any recent modification of the prevailing theology, that materially affects the point now before us. When I say that, according to that theology, religion is not wrought out of any materials found in us, it may be thought that I do injustice to the views of some of its adherents. They hold perhaps, that the necessary *powers are* within us; and simply maintain that they have never been rightly exercised, and that, without a special impulse from above, they never will be. On this supposition, the moral faculties of our nature stand like machinery, waiting for the stream of influence that is to move them. In the unregenerate nature, they have never been moved, or have never been *rightly* moved; and they never will be, by any power among them or inherent in them. That motion or that right motion when it comes, will be religion. But on this supposition, is not religion a thing still and equally unknown? Can the unregenerate man

foresee—can he conjecture what that *motion* will be? Can anybody understand what it is, saving and excepting the converted man himself?

I suppose that this conclusion is incontrovertible; and I presume that almost every convert to the popular forms of religion would be found to say, "I cannot tell you what it is that I have got—I cannot tell you what religion is: but I know by experience what it is; and that is enough for me."

This view of religion I propose to make the subject of some free discussion. It demands the most serious consideration; and I do not remember that it has received at any hand the attention that it deserves.

I shall first state the opposite, and, as I conceive, the true view of religion, and briefly show why it is true: and I shall then proceed to consider more at large, the consequences that must result and do result from the prevailing, and, as I conceive, the false view.

And here let me distinctly observe, that I am not about to consider these consequences as matters foreign and indifferent to ourselves. They belong to us indeed, as they concern the general state of religion in the world. But they concern us yet more nearly, as they enter more or less into the state of our own minds. No age can escape the influence of the past. The moral history of the world is a stream that is not to be cut off at a single point. In *us*, doubtless, are to be found the relics of all past creeds, of all past errors.

But before I proceed to these consequences, I am briefly to state and defend what I conceive to be the true view of religion, as a principle in the mind.

For statement then I say, in the first place, that all men know what God requires of them—what affections, what virtues, what graces, what emotions of penitence and piety; in the second place, that all men have a capacity for these affections, and some exercise of them, however slight and transient; and in the third place, that what God requires, what constitutes the salvation of the soul, is the culture, strengthening, enlargement, predominance of these very affections; that he who makes that conscience, and rectitude, and self-denial, and penitence, and sacred love of God which he already perceives and feels, or has felt in himself, however imperfectly—he who makes these affections the fixed, abiding, and victorious habits of his soul, is accepted with God, and must be happy in time and in eternity.

This is the statement; and for defence of this view of religion I submit its own reasonableness; nay, and I contend for its absolute certainty as a matter of Scriptural interpretation.

First, its reasonableness. For if men, if all men, do not know what religion is, they do not know what is required of them. To say that God demands that to be done in us and by us, of which we have no conception, or no just conception, is to make a statement which carries with it its own refutation. To make a *mystery* of a *commandment*, is a solecism amounting to absolute self-contradiction. Again, we could not know what are the affections that are required of us, unless it were by some experience of them. It is philosophically impossible—it is, in the nature of things, impossible—that we should. No words, no symbols could teach us what moral or spiritual emotion is, unless we had in ourselves some feeling of what it is; any more than they could

teach a blind man what it is to see, or a deaf man what it is to hear; excellence, holiness, justice, disinterestedness, love, are words which never could have any meaning to us, if the originals, the germs of those qualities, were not within us. Let any person ask himself what he understands by love—the love of man or of God—and how he obtained the idea of that affection; and he will find that he understands it, because he feels it, or has some time or other felt it. Once more, I have said that these feelings of benevolence and piety, cultivated into the predominant habit of the soul, are the very virtues and graces that are required of us. And is not this obviously true? We all know by something of experience, what it is to love those around us—to wish them well—to be kindly affectioned and mercifully disposed towards them: and we all have had some transient emotions, at least, of gratitude and love to the Infinite Father. Now if all these affections were to fill our hearts, and shine in our lives always, what would this be, but that character in which all true religion and happiness are bound up?

Thus reasonable is the ground which we are defending. But I have said also, that it is certain from the principles that must govern us in the interpretation of Scripture. The Bible addresses itself to the world, and demands a certain character. In describing that character, it adopts terms in common use. It tells us that we must be lovers of God, and lovers of men; that we must be gentle, forbearing, and forgiving; true, pure, and faithful. Now if it does not mean by these words, as to their radical sense, what we all mean by them; if it uses them in an altogether extraordinary and unintelligible manner, then, in the first place, it teaches nothing; and next, it leads us into fatal error. The conclusion is inevitable. What the Bible presupposes to be a right knowledge of religion, *is* a right knowledge.

I am not denying that we are to grow in this knowledge, through experience: and that, from our want of this enlightening experience, much is said to us in the Scriptures of our own blindness; much of the new light that will break in upon us, with the *full* experience of the power of the Gospel. But to a world totally blind, wrapped in total darkness, and having no conception of what light is, the Bible would not have spoken of light. The word stands for an idea. If the idea, and the just idea, did not exist, the word would not be used.

There is, then, a light in the human soul, amidst all its darkness; an inward light; a divine light; a light, which, if it were increased, instead of being dimmed, would shine brighter and brighter, even to the perfect day. Let any man have taken the best feeling that ever was in him—some feeling, however transient, of kindness to his fellow, or some emotion of reverence and gratitude to his Creator—let him have taken that feeling and all that class of feelings, and cultivated and carried it up to an abiding habit of mind, and he would have become a good and pious man. This change, from transient to habitual emotions of goodness and piety, is the very regeneration that is required of us. The being, so changed, would be "born again," would be "a new creature!" "Old things with him would have passed away, and all things would have become new."

Now, according to the common doctrine, instead of this slow, thorough, intelligible, and practical change, we are to look for a new and unknown element to be introduced among our affections. A man

feels that he must become a Christian, that he must obtain that character on which all happiness, here and hereafter, depends. And now, what does he do? Finding in himself an emotion of good-will, of affection for his neighbour, does he fasten upon that, and say, "This must I cherish and cultivate into a genuine philanthropy, and a disinterested love"? Feeling the duty of being honest, does he say, "This practical conscience must I erect into a law"? Sensible, in some gracious hour, of the goodness of God, or the worth of a Saviour, does he say, "Let me keep and bear upon my heart the reverent and sacred impression"? No; all this the popular theology repudiates, and represents as a going about to establish our own righteousness. "No; it says, you must feel that you can do nothing yourself; you must cast yourself, a helpless, despairing sinner, upon the mercy of God; you must not look to the powers of a totally depraved nature to help you at all; you must cast yourself wholly upon Christ; you must look to the renewing power of the Holy Ghost, and to the creation in you of something totally different from anything that is in you now."

The question between these two views of religion is certainly one of a very serious character; one on which momentous consequences depend. And it is a question, too, which concerns not one or another form of sectarian faith alone, but the entire condition of Christianity in the world. The idea of religion on which I have dwelt so much in this discourse with a view to controvert it, has penetrated the whole mass of religious opinion. No body of Christians has entirely escaped it; not even our own; though our characteristic position, as I conceive, at the present moment, is one of protest against it. I say at the present moment. We have gone through with the speculative controversy. It may be renewed, no doubt; but there will be hardly anything new to be said upon it. We have gone through, then, with the argument about the Trinity, the Atonement, Election, and such speculative matters: and we have come now to the greater question, what is religion itself? And what we say is, that religion is a principle, deep-imbedded in the conscience and consciousness of all mankind, and that from these germs of it, which are to be found in human nature, it is to be cultivated and carried up to perfection. What is maintained on the contrary, is, that religion, the true and saving religion, is a principle of which human nature is completely ignorant; that, to make a man a Christian, is to implant in him a principle, entirely new, and before unknown. Whether it be called a principle, or a new mode of spiritual action—for some may prefer the latter description—it is the same thing in this respect. The man unregenerate, according to this teaching, can no more tell what he is to feel when made regenerate, than a man can anticipate what a shock of electricity will be, or what will be the effect upon his system of a new poison, or what would be the experience of a sixth sense.

The establishment of this point is so material in this whole discussion, that I shall occupy the few moments that remain to me, with the attempt to relieve the views I have offered from all misapprehension.

Let it then be distinctly observed, in the first place, that the question is not at all about the nature, or necessity, or degree, of divine influence. Not what power from above is exerted to produce religion in the soul, but what the religion is, however produced; not what divine

aid is given to human endeavour, but what is the nature and result of that endeavour; not what grace from God, but what grace in man, is —this is the question. Of course, we believe in general, that all true religion, in common with everything else good, proceeds from God. And for myself, I firmly believe, that it pleases the Almighty to give special assistance to the humble and prayerful efforts of his weak and tempted creatures; and this, not only when those efforts are resolutely commenced, but in every successive step of the religious course; not merely nor peculiarly in the hour of conversion, but equally in the whole process of the soul's sanctification. I know of no Scripture warrant for supposing that this divine influence is limited to any particular season, or is concentrated upon any particular exigency of the soul's experience.

In the next place, I do not say that the notion of religion as a mystery or an enigma embraces or usurps the whole of the popular idea of religion. When I shall come to speak of the injurious consequences of this idea, I shall maintain that an enigma cannot be the object of any moral admiration, or love, or culture, or sensibility; and I may then be asked if I mean to say that there is no religious goodness or earnestness among those who embrace this idea. And to this, I answer beforehand and decidedly, "No, I do not mean to say this." If the idea were not modified nor qualified in any way, if no other ideas mixed themselves up with that of a mystic religion, this would be the result. It is seldom that error practically stands alone. Still, it is proper to single it out, and to consider it by itself. And I do maintain, too, that this error predominates sufficiently to exert the most disastrous influence upon the religion of the whole Christian world.

The whole of Christianity, as it is commonly received, is, in my view, greatly perverted, corrupted, and enfeebled by this error. Christianity is not regarded as a clearer and more impressive exhibition of the long-established, well-known, eternal laws of man's spiritual welfare, but as the bringing in of an entirely new scheme of salvation. The common interpretation of it, instead of recognising the liberal Apostolic doctrine, that the way of salvation is known to all men, that those not having the written law are a law to themselves, and that in every nation, he that worships God, and works righteousness, is accepted of him, holds in utter derogation and sovereign scorn all heathen light and virtue. The prevailing idea is, that the Gospel is a certain device or contrivance of divine wisdom, to save men—not helping them in the way which they already perceive in their own consciousness, but superseding all such ways, and laying them aside entirely—not opening and unfolding new lights and encouragements to that way, by revelations of God's paternal mercy, and pledges of his forgiving love, but revealing a way altogether new.

Thus the Gospel itself is made a kind of mystic secret. I cannot allow a few of the more intelligent expounders of it to reply, as if that were sufficient, that *they* do not regard it in this light. I ask them to consider what is the *general* impression conveyed by most preachers of Christianity. They may be offended when we say that vital religion is commonly represented as a mystery, an enigma, to the mass of their hearers. But let us not dispute about words. They *do* represent it as something created in the heart, which was not there before—of which

no element was there before—of which no man's previous experience ever gives him any information, any conception. If this is not a mystery to mankind, it would be difficult to tell what there is that deserves the name. Suppose the same thing to be applied to men's general *knowledge*. Men *know* many things; but suppose it were asserted, that, in all their knowing, there is not one particle of true knowledge, and that only here and there one, who has been specially and divinely enlightened, possesses any such knowledge. Would not such knowledge, then, be a secret shared by a few, and kept from the rest of the world? Would it not be a profound mystery to the mass of mankind? Yes; and a mystery all the darker for the seeming light that surrounded it.

How much is there that passes in the bosom of society, unquestioned and almost unknown! It is this which prevents us from seeing the momentous fact, and the character of the fact, which I have now been attempting to strip bare and to lay before you. It would seem that we least know that which is nearest to us, which is most familiar and most certain, which is mixed up most intimately with all present thought and usage, and with the life that we daily live. A thing must become history, it would seem, before we can fairly read it. This is commonly allowed to be true of political affairs; but it is just as true of all human experience. Thus, if there had been a sect among the old philosophers, which pretended to hold the exclusive possession of all science; if certain persons had stood up in the ancient time, and said, "That which other men call science is all an illusion; we alone truly know anything; all other men are but fools and idiots in this matter; they suppose themselves to know, but they know nothing; they use words, and make distinctions, and write books, as if they knew, but they know nothing; they do not even know what knowing is;" such a pretension we should not hesitate to characterize as a strange mixture of mysticism and arrogance. But the same assumption in regard to religion is now put forth among ourselves: it is announced every week from the pulpit; it is constantly written in books; it enters into every argument about total depravity, and regeneration, and divine grace; and men seem totally insensible to its enormity; it is regarded as a mark of peculiar wisdom and sanctity; the men who take this ground are the accredited Christian teachers of multitudes; they speak as if the secret of the matter were in them, and as if they were perfectly entitled, in virtue of a certain divine illumination which they have received, to pronounce all other religious claims to be groundless and false; to say of all other men but the body of the elect, "They think they know what religion is; they talk about it; they make disquisitions and distinctions as if they knew, but they know nothing about it; they do not even know what true religious knowing is." And all the people say, amen. There is no rebuke; there is no questioning; the light of coming ages has not yet shone upon this pretension; and the people say, it is all very right—very true.

I pray you, in fine, not to regard what I have now been saying as a sectarian remonstrance. Nay, and if it were so, it would not be likely to be half strong enough. There is a heavy indifference on this subject of religion, that weighs down remonstrance, and will not let it rise as it ought. If certain shipmasters, or merchants, should say that they alone understood navigation; if certain mechanicians or manufacturers

should assert that they alone understood their art or their business; if certain lawyers, or physicians, should lay exclusive claim to the knowledge of law, or medicine, there would be an outburst of indignation and scorn on every hand. "What presumption! what folly! these people are deranged!"—would be the exclamation. But men may make this claim in religion; a few persons, comparatively, in Christendom, may say, "We only have religion; we alone truly know what religion is;" and the indifference of society replies, "No matter; let them claim it; let them have it;" as if the matter were not worth disputing about. And if some one arouses himself to examine and to resist this claim, indifference still says, "This is but a paltry, sectarian dispute."

No, sirs; I answer, this is not a sectarian dispute. It is not a sectarian remonstrance that is demanded here; but the remonstrance of all human experience. Religion is the science of man's intrinsic and immortal welfare. What is a true knowledge, what is a true experience here, is a question of nothing less than infinite moment. All that a man is to enjoy or suffer for ever, depends upon the right practical solution of this very question. Everywhere else—in business, in science, in his profession—may a man mistake with comparative impunity. But if he mistakes here—if he does not know, and know by experience, what it is to be good and pure, what it is to love God, and to be conformed to his image, he is, in spite of all that men or angels can do for him, a ruined creature.

Settle it then with yourselves, my brethren, what true religion, true goodness, is. I will attempt, in some further discourses, to lead you to the inferences that follow from this discussion. But it is so fruitful in obvious inferences, that I am willing, for the present, to leave it with you for your reflection. But this I say now. Settle it with yourselves what true religion is. If it is a mystery, then leave no means untried to become acquainted with that mystery. If it is but the cultivation, the increase in you, of what you already know and feel to be right, then address yourselves to that work of self-culture, as men who know that more than fortunes and honours depend upon it—who know that the soul, that heaven, that eternity, depends upon it.

ON THE IDENTITY OF RELIGION WITH GOODNESS, AND WITH A GOOD LIFE.

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1 JOHN iv. 20: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

I HAVE presented, in my last discourse, two views of religion, or of the supreme human excellence; and I have offered some brief, but as I conceive, decisive considerations, to show which is the right view. The one regards religion or the saving virtue, as a new creation in the soul; the other as the culture of what is already in the soul. The one contemplates conversion as the introduction of an entirely new element, or of an entirely new mode of action, into our nature; the other, as a strengthening, elevating, and confirming of the conscience, the reverence and the love that are already a part of our nature. A simple comparison drawn from vegetable nature will show the difference. Here is a garden of plants. The rational gardener looks upon them all as having in them the elements of growth and perfection. His business is to cultivate them. To make the comparison more exact—he sees that these plants have lost their proper beauty and shapeliness, that they are distorted and dwarfed, and choked with weeds. But still the germs of improvement are in them, and his business is to cultivate them. But now what does the theological gardener say? "No, in not one of these plants is to be found the germ of the right production. To obtain this, it is necessary to graft upon each one a new principle of life."

Now I have said, that, upon the theory in question, this new creation, this new element, this graft upon the stock of humanity, is, and must be to the mass of mankind, a mystery, an enigma, a profound secret. And is not this obviously true? Man, in a state of nature, it is constantly taught, has not one particle of the true saving excellence. How then should he know what it is? "Very true," says the popular theorist; "I accept the conclusion; is it not *written*, the natural man receiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." That is to say, the popular theorist understands by the natural man, in this much-quoted and much-misunderstood passage, *human nature*. If he construed it to mean, the *sensual* man, I conceive that he would arrive at a just exposition. But that is not the point in question now. He does construe it to mean human nature: this is constantly done. Human nature being nothing but one mass of unmingled depravity—having never had one right

motion or one right feeling, can, of course, have no knowledge of any such motion or feeling.

And to show that this is not a matter of doctrine only, but of experience too, let me spread before you a single supposition of what often, doubtless, takes place in fact. A man of generally fair and unexceptionable life, is lying upon his bed of death, and is visited and questioned, with a view to his spiritual condition. Suppose now he were to say, "I have had for some time past, though I never confessed it before, a certain, unusual, indescribable feeling in my heart on the subject of religion. It came upon me—for I remember it well—in such a month of such a year; it was a new feeling; I had never felt anything like it before. Ever since, I have had a hope that I then experienced religion. Not that I trust myself, or anything in myself; I cast all my burthen upon Christ; nothing but Christ—nothing but Christ, is the language upon my lips with which I would part from this world;" and would not this declaration, I ask, though conveying not one intelligible or definite idea to the most of those around him, be held to be a very satisfactory account of his preparation for futurity? But now suppose that he should express himself in a different manner, and should utter the thoughts of his heart thus: "I know that I am far from perfect, that I have, in many things, been very unfaithful; I see much to repent of, for which I hope and implore God's forgiveness. But I do trust that, for a number of years, I have been growing in goodness; that I have had a stronger and stronger control over my passions. Alas! I remember sad and mournful years, in which they had dominion over me; but I do trust that I did at length gain the victory; and that latterly, I have become, every year, more and more pure, kind, gentle, patient, disinterested, spiritual, and devout. I feel that God's presence, in which I am ever happiest, has been more abidingly with me; and in short, I hope that the foundations of true happiness have been laid deep in my soul; and that, through God's mercy, of which I acknowledge the most adorable manifestation and the most blessed pledge in the Gospel, I shall be happy for ever." And now I ask you—do you not think that this account, with many persons, would have lost just as much in satisfactoriness as it has gained in clearness? Would not some of the wise, the guides in Israel, go away, shaking their heads, and saying, they feared it would never do? "Too much talk about his own virtues!"—they would say—"too little about Christ!"—with an air itself mysterious in that solemn reference. And doubtless, if this man had talked more mystically about Christ, and grace, and the holy Spirit, it would have been far more satisfactory. And yet he has stated, and clearly stated, the essential grounds of all human welfare and hope.

How often in life—to take another instance—does a highly moral and excellent man say, "I hope I am not a bad man; I mean to do right; I trust I am not devoid of all kind and generous affections towards my fellow-men, or of all grateful feelings towards my Maker; but then I do not profess to have religion. I do not pretend that I am a Christian in any degree." Let not my construction of this case be mistaken. Doubtless, in many such persons there are great defects, nay, and defects proceeding partly from the very error which I am combating. For if I were to say to such persons, "Yes, you have

some good and pious affections in you, which God approves, and your only business is, to give the supremacy to these very affections which are already in you"—I should be thought to have lulled his conscience, fostered his pride, and ruined his soul. I should be regarded as a worldly moralizer, a preacher of smooth things, a follower of the long-doomed heresy of Pelagius. "No," it would be said, "there is no saving virtue in that man; there is nothing in him that can be strengthened, or refined, or elevated, or confirmed into holiness; there is no spark to be fanned into a flame, no germ to be reared into saving life and beauty; all these things are to be flung aside to make way for the reception of something altogether new—as new as light to the blind, or as life to the dead. That something, when it comes, will be what he never knew before, never felt before, never before clearly saw or conceived of; and it is undoubtedly, though that is an unusual way of describing it—it is, to depraved human nature, a mystery."

This unquestionable assumption of the popular religion, I shall now proceed freely to discuss in several points of view—in its bearing on the estimate and treatment of religion, on its culture, and on its essential vitality and power.

In the present discourse I shall consider its bearing on the estimate, and on the treatment of religion.

First, the general estimate of the nature, reasonableness, and beauty of religion—what can it be, if religion is a mystery, an enigma, a thing unknown? We may feel *curiosity* about a mystery; and I have seen more than one person seeking religion from this impulse—because they would know what it can be. This is uncommon, doubtless; but, taken in any view—can men be in love with a mystery? Can they feel any moral admiration for an enigma? Can their affections be strongly drawn to what is completely unknown? Can they feel even the rectitude of that, of which they have no appreciation, no idea? Certainly not; and in accordance with this view, is the old Calvinistic doctrine concerning the means of grace; which utterly denied the force of moral suasion, and held that there is no natural tendency in preaching to change the heart; that the connection between preaching and regeneration was as purely arbitrary as that between the voice of Ezekiel over the valley of dry bones, and their resurrection to life.

But suppose this view of preaching be modified, and that a man *designs* to impress his hearers with the reasonableness and beauty of religion, and so to draw their hearts to it. What, let us ask him, can you do, upon the principle, that religion is utterly foreign to human nature—an absolute secret to humanity? You have denied and rejected the only means of *rational* impression—some knowledge and experience in the hearers of that about which you are speaking to them. You have disannulled the very laws and grounds of penitence; for how can men feel to blame for not possessing the knowledge of a secret? In fine, you may be a magician to men, upon this principle; but I do not perceive how you can be a rational preacher. You may say, "This of which I speak to you is something wonderful; try it; you have no idea what it will be to you; you will find"—you cannot say, you see—but, "you will find that it is something delightful and beautiful beyond all things." And have we never witnessed a preaching which seemed to work upon the hearers, as it were, by a kind of art magic: solemn and

affecting tones, a preternatural air, a talking, as of some secret in heaven, ready to come right down into the hearts of the hearers, if they will; an awful expostulation with them for their refusal; a mysterious influence drawn around the place; dark depths of woe here; a bright haze of splendour there; heaven above, hell beneath; and the sinner suspended between them by a parting cord? And how, oh! how was he now to escape? Mark the answer—for if there ever was a mystery, here is one. By some stupendous change then and there to take place; not by rationally cultivating any good affections—not by solemnly resolving to do so—not at all by that kind of change; but by a change instant, immense, mysterious, incomprehensible—a change that would wrap up in that moment the destinies of eternity—that should gather up all the welfare or woe of the infinite ages of being, into the mysterious bosom of that awful moment!

Can such teaching as this go to the silent depths of real and rational conviction? Did Jesus Christ teach in this manner? Think how natural, how moral, how simple, his teachings were. Think how he taught men their duty in every form which the instant occasion suggested. Think of his deep sobriety, of his solemn appeals to conscience rather than to imagination, to what was *in* man rather than what was out of him; and then answer me. Did the great Bible preachers teach so? Behold the beauty of holiness, they say, behold the glory of the Lord; "know and see that it is an evil thing and bitter to depart" from them. "Come, ye children, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is he that desireth life and loveth many days that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon such righteous ones, and his ears are open to their cry." All simple; all intelligible; all plain and level to the humblest apprehension; no talking of a mysterious secret here; no mysterious talking anyway!

It is very difficult to speak the exact and undisputed truth upon any point, amidst the endless shapings and shadowings of language and opinion. I myself, who protest against making a secret of religion, may be found speaking of most men as very ignorant of religion; of the depths of the Gospel as yet to be sounded by them; of the preciousness of the great resource as yet to be felt—yet to be found out by them. But I am well understood by those who are accustomed to hear me, not to mean anything which is radically a secret to humanity, but simply the increase and consummation in the soul, of that which it already knows and experiences. The change from transient and unstable, to habitual and abiding emotions of goodness and piety, is the most immense, the most important, the most glorious on earth; and it is one, of which those who are ignorant of it, cannot clearly foresee all the blessed fruits.

Again; it is very difficult to describe what is deemed a great error, without seeming to do it harshly. I would gladly avoid this imputation. God forbid that I should speak lightly of the preaching of good and earnest men. I must speak plainly of it. I must remonstrate against what I deem to be its errors. But I do not forget that, with all error, there is a mixture of truth. No doubt, there are, in all pulpits, many appeals, however inconsistent with the prevailing theology, to what men

naturally know and feel of the rectitude and beauty of religion. But from this mass of teaching, I single out one element which, I say, is not accordant with truth; which, I must say, is not only false, but fatal to all just appreciation of religion.

And does not the actual state of things, show this to be the fact? With what eyes are men, in fact, looking upon a religion which holds itself to be a mystic secret in the bosom of a few? Do you not know that the entire literature and philosophy of the age, are in a state of revolt against it? Our literature has its ideals of character, its images of virtue and worth; it pourtrays the moral beauty that it admires; but is there one trace of this mystic religion in its delineations? Our philosophy, our moral philosophy especially, whose very business it is to decide what is right, calmly treads this religion under foot—does not consider its claims at all. And the cultivators of literature, of science, and of art, with a multitude of thoughtful and intelligent men besides them—is it not a well-ascertained fact that they are remarkably indifferent to this kind of religion? Here and there one has fallen in with it; but the instance is rare. But if religion were presented to them as a broad and rational principle, we might expect the reverse to be the fact. Thoughtful men—cultivators of literature and art, are the very men whose minds are most conversant with images of moral beauty. Show them that all true moral beauty is a part of religion; tell them that a Christian, in the true sense, is a man of principle, of truth and integrity, of kindness and modesty, of reverence and devotion to the Supreme Glory; and they must feel that all this is interesting. But if religion is some mysterious property ingrafted into the soul, differing altogether from all that men are wont to call rectitude and beauty; must not all intellect, and taste, and all moral enthusiasm, and all social generosity, and love, shrink from it? In truth, I wonder that they are so patient as they are; and nothing but indifference about the whole matter can account for this patience. When the preacher rises in his pulpit and tells the congregation, that, excepting that grace which is found in a few, all their integrity and virtue, all their social love and gentleness, all their alms and prayers, have not, in the sight of God, one particle of true goodness or worth; nothing, I say, but profound apathy and unbelief can account for their listening to the sermon with any patience—with an instant's toleration of the crushing burthen of that doctrine. Or suppose this doctrine embodied into a character, and then how does it appear? Suppose one person in a family, possessing this mystic grace—in no other respect, that anybody can see, better than the rest—no more amiable, nor gentle, nor disinterested, no more just, nor forbearing, nor loving—and suppose this person to take the position of being the only one in that family that is approved of God, to hold all the rest as reprobate, and doomed to destruction—is it possible, I ask, to feel for that person in that character, any respect, or admiration, or love? Nay, I have known persons of the greatest defects of character, and even of gross vices, to take this ground of superiority, in virtue of a certain inward grace which they conceive has been applied to them. And I say not this for the sake of opprobrium; but because this ground is, in fact, a legitimate consequence of the doctrine, that saving grace in the heart is an entirely distinct and different thing from what men ordinarily call virtue and goodness.

But farther; what is the state of feeling towards religion among those who *accept* this doctrine? In those strongholds of theology, or of church institution, where this doctrine is entrenched, where it is preserved as a treasure sacred from all profane invasion, or held as a bulwark against what are called the inroads of insidious error—in these places, I say, what is the feeling? If religion is not any known or felt sentiment or affection of human nature to be cultivated, but is a spell that comes upon the heart of one and another, and nobody can tell how or when it will come, I can conceive that there may be much fear and anxiety about it; but how there should be much true freedom, or genuine and generous love, I cannot conceive. I do not profess to have any very intimate acquaintance with the mind of such a congregation; but if religion does not press as an incubus upon the minds of many there—if it is not a bugbear to the young, and a mystery to the thoughtful, and a dull dead weight upon the hearts of the uninitiated; if, in its *votaries*, it is not ever swaying between the extremes of death-like coldness and visionary rapture; if it is not a little pent-up hope of salvation, rather than a generous and quickening principle of culture; if the fire in the secret shrine does not wither the gentle and lofty virtues; I must confess that I understand nothing of the tendencies of human nature. There may be much religiousness in such a state of things; but much of this has existed in many a state, Heathen, Mahometan, Catholic, and Protestant too, without much of true religion. I do not say, that the churches consist generally of bad people; many influences unite to form the character; but I say that in so far as any churches hold their religion to be some special grace implanted in them, and different from all that other men feel of goodness and piety, so far their assumption tends directly to make them neglect the cultivation of all true worth and nobleness of character. And I am not shaken in this position by the admission, which I am willing to make, that there are probably more good men, in proportion, *in* the churches than *out* of them; for profession itself, the eye of the world upon them, and the use of certain ordinances, are powerful influences. They are powerful, and yet they are not the loftiest influences. They restrain, more than they impel. And the very morality of an exclusive religion is apt to wear features hard, stern, ungenial, and unlovely.

I have said, in the opening of my first discourse, that the great mission of the true teacher, in this age, is to establish the identity of religion and goodness. And the reason is, that by no other means can religion be really esteemed and loved. Feared it may be; desired it may be; but by no other means, I repeat, can it be truly and heartily esteemed and loved.

Now, consider that religion stands before the world with precisely this claim—the claim to be, above all other things, reverenced and loved. Nay, it demands this love on pain of perdition for failure. Does the world respond to this claim? Does public sentiment anywhere yield to it? There *are* things that unite the moral suffrages of mankind—honesty, integrity, disinterestedness, pity for the sorrowful, true love, true sanctity, self-sacrifice, martyrdom—and among them, and above them all, the character of Jesus Christ. Among these, does Calvinistic piety hold any place? This is a fair and unexceptionable question, in the sense in which I mean it. I am not speaking at all of

persons, I am speaking of an idea. Is the Calvinistic idea of piety—is it among the beautiful and venerable ideals and objects of the world's conscience—of the world's moral feeling? Surely not. But it will not do to say that this is because the world is so bad. For the character of our Saviour *is* among those objects! Bad as the world is, yet all sects, and classes, and communities—all infidels, and Mahometans, and heathens—have agreed, without one single solitary whisper of contradiction, that this character is a perfect example of true, divine excellence! Does the Calvinistic ideal of religion draw to it any such testimony? Then what clearer evidence can there be that it is wrong?

And if it be wrong, if it is an error—what terrible and awful mischiefs must follow in its train! Mankind required, as the supreme duty, to love that which all their natural sentiments oblige them to dislike, and none of their natural powers, in fact, enable them to understand! What peril must there be of their salvation in such a case! What a calamitous state of things must it be for their highest hopes! What confusion, what embroilment and distraction to all their moral convictions! Nothing else can account for that blind wandering of many souls after the true good, which we see; for that wild fanaticism which has taken the place of sober and intelligent seeking; for that distracted running up and down, of men who know not what they are to get, nor how to get it, nor what, in any way, to do; and yet more, for that profound and dreadful apathy of many, who have concluded that they can do nothing, who have given up all thoughts of life as the voyage of the soul, and have resigned themselves to wait for some chance wave of excitement to bear them to the wished-for haven.

Believe me, my friends, this is no abstract matter. It touches the vital ideas of human welfare. It concerns what is most practical, most momentous. In all congregations, in all townships and villages through the land, an image is held up of religion—an idea of what is the supreme excellence. It is regarded with doubt, and fear, and misgiving; not with love, or enthusiasm, or admiration. It is not fair loveliness or beauty, but a dark enigma. It is not the supreme excellence, but the supreme necessity. It is not intelligently sought, but blindly wished for. Alas! it is hard enough to get men to pursue the true excellence, when they are plainly told what it is. But here is a dread barrier on the very threshold, and they cannot proceed a single step. They can do nothing till they are converted; they know not what it is to be converted; and they wait for the initiative to come from heaven; not knowing, alas! that to be converted is, with heaven's help, to begin; to take the first determined step, and the second, and thus to go onward; to begin upon the ground of what they actually know, and thus to go on to perfection. Religion—the beauty of the world—that which mingles as their pervading spirit with the glory of the heavens, and the loveliness of nature—that which breathes in the affections of parents and children, and in all the good affections of society—that which ascends in humble penitence and prayer to the throne of God—this is no mystic secret. It is to be good and kind, penitent and pure, temperate and self-denying, patient and prayerful; modest, and generous, and loving, as thou knowest how to be—loving, in reverent thoughts of the good God, and in kind thoughts of all his children. It is plain—*not easy*—not in that sense natural, but natural

in its accordance with all the loftiest sentiments of thy nature—easy in this, that nothing ever sat with such perfect peace and calm upon thy soul as that will. It is so plain, that he who runs may read. It is the way in which fools need not err. "For what doth the Lord require of thee"—saith the prophet, indignant at the complaint of ignorance—"what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Let me now proceed, in the next place, from the estimate, to the treatment, of religion. The topics, indeed, are closely connected; for the treatment of the subject will, of course, depend on the estimate formed of its character and merits. This consideration, it is evident, might carry us through the whole subject; but I shall not, at present, touch upon the ground of religious culture and religious earnestness, which I have reserved for separate discussion. In the remainder of this discourse, I shall confine myself to the *treatment* of religion; as a matter of investigation, and of institution, and as a matter to be approached in practical seeking. The space that remains to me will oblige me to do this very briefly; and, indeed, to touch upon one or two topics under these several heads, is all that I shall attempt.

Under the head of investigation, the subject of religious controversy presents itself.

Every one must be aware that religious controversy is distinguished by certain remarkable traits, from all other controversy. There has generally been a severity, a bigotry, an exclusion, and an obstinacy in it, not found in any other disputes. What has invested with these strange and unseemly attributes, a subject of such tender, sublime, and eternal interest? I conceive that it is this—the idea that within the inmost bosom of religion, lies a secret—a something peculiar, distinct from all other qualities in the human character, and refusing to be judged of as other things are judged of—a secret wrapped about with the divine favour, and revealed only to a few. There is an unknown element in the case, and it is difficult to obtain a solution. The question is perplexed by it, as a question in chemistry would be by the presence of some undetected substance. Or if the element is known to some, it is held to be unknown to others, and this assumption lays the amplest ground for bigotry and exclusion. If I know what religion is, and another man does not know, I am perfectly entitled, if I think proper, to reject his claim to it—to say that some defect of faith, or of ritual in him, forbids the possibility of his having it. Nothing is easier, than on this basis to form an exclusive sect; it is, in fact, the legitimate, and the only legitimate, basis of such a sect. I say the only legitimate basis; because, if everything in this matter be fairly submitted to inquiry and decision—the vitality of religion, as well as its creed and ritual; if all men can, by care and study, know what it is; if all men must know what it is, by the very law written on their hearts; then it is absurd for one party to lay claim to the sole knowledge and possession of it. Wrap it up in secrecy, and then, and then only, may you consistently wrap it up in exclusion.

Only think of an exclusive party in science or art. Think of such a sect saying to all others, "We only have the true love of science or art; we only have the true spirit of science or art;" and why would not their claim stand for a moment? because all other men of learning and

skill would say, "We are as competent to judge of this matter as you are. There is no secret in knowledge. There is no exclusive key to wisdom. There is no hidden way to art. Prove that there is, and then it may be that the mystery is in your possession. But until you establish this point, your claim is absurd and insufferable, and not worth examination."

Now the whole evil as well as the whole peculiarity of religious controversy, lies in this spirit of exclusion—in the assumption that opponents cannot be good men. Otherwise, controversy is a good thing. That is to say, honest and friendly discussion is good. The whole evil, I say, lies in the assumption of an exclusive knowledge of religion. Persecution proceeds upon no other ground. Men have been imprisoned, tortured, put to death, not merely because they erred, not simply because they differed from their brethren, but because that error, that difference, was supposed to involve the very salvation of the soul. Men have been punished, not as errorists simply, but as men irreligious and bad, and as making others so. I speak now of honest persecution. Its object has been the salvation of souls. Its doctrine has been, "painful as torture is, it is better than perdition; better fires on earth than fires in hell." But the persecuted brethren say, "We are not irreligious and bad men. We wish the truest good to ourselves and others; and though you oppose us, as you must, you ought not to hate, or torture, or vilify us; we no more deserve it than you do." And what is the reply? "You know nothing about the matter. You suppose yourselves to be good and true, and to have favour with God and a good hope of heaven; but we know better; we *know* what true religion is, and we say that you are totally devoid of it." And this judgment, I repeat, can fairly proceed upon nothing but the notion that religion is a secret in the possession of the persecutors.

Let it be otherwise, as surely it ought to be, if anything ought; let religion, the great sentiment, the great interest of humanity, be common ground, open and common to all; let men take their stand upon it, and say, as they say in other differences of opinion, "We all wish the same thing; we would all be happy, we would get to heaven; what else can we wish?" and do you not see how instantly religious disputes would take on a new character; how gentle, and charitable, and patient, and tolerant, they would become? But now, alas! the toleration of science, of art, nay, and of politics too, goes beyond the toleration of religion! Men do not say to their literary or political opposers, "Ye are haters of science or art; ye hate the common country;" but in religion, they say, "Ye are haters of God, and of good men, and of all that is truly good." Yes, the occasion for this tremendous exclusion is found in religion—that which was ordained to be the bond of love, the bosom of confidence, the garner of souls into heaven; the theme of all grandeur and of all tenderness; the comforter of affliction, the loving nurse of all human virtues, the range of infinity, the reach to eternity, the example of the one meek and lowly; the authority, at once, and the pity, of the heavenly Father!

The next subject for the application of the point I am considering, is religious institutions. Under this head, I must content myself with briefly pointing out a single example. The example is the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. The question I have to ask is—why do so

many sober, conscientious, and truly religious persons, refrain from a participation in this rite? And the answer, with many, is doubtless to be found in the notion, that religion involves some secret, or the experience of some secret grace—something different from moral uprightness and religious gratitude—with which they are not acquainted. I do not say that this account embraces every case of neglect, but I say that it embraces many. I will suppose a person, conscious of a sincere intent to be in all things a true and good man, conscious too of religious affections, and desirous of cultivating them—one, believing in Christ, believing that his life and his death are the most powerful known ministration to human sanctity and blessedness; one, also, truly disposed to impress the spirit of Christ upon his own heart, and persuaded that the meditations of the Communion season would be a help and comfort to him; and why now, I ask, shall he not avail himself of that appointed means? He is desirous of sacred culture. This is a means, and he wishes to embrace it. Why does he not? I am sure that I may answer for him, that he would do so if he felt that he were qualified. But this is the difficulty; he is afraid that there is some qualification, *unknown to him;* and that he shall commit a sin of rashness and presumption if he comes to the sacred ordinance.

My friends, it is all a mistake. You *do* know, in a greater or less measure, what Christian virtue, what Christian piety is. You *can* know, whether you desire to cultivate this character. If you do, that very desire is the qualification. Means are for those who need them, not for those who need them not—for the imperfect, not for the perfect. The felt need of means, the sincere desire of means, is the qualification for them. If, being believers in Christianity, you also believe that our communion meditations would help you, you should as such come to them, as you come to the prayers of the sanctuary. And you should as freely come. The Lord's Supper is a service no more sacred than the service of prayer. Nothing can be more solemn than solemn prayer.

There is one more subject to be noticed under this head of treatment of religion—by far the most important of all—and that is religious seeking; the seeking, in other words, to establish in one's self that character on which God's approbation, and all true good, all true happiness, depend, and will for ever depend. Momentous pursuit!—that for which man was made, and life with all its ordinances was given, and the Gospel, with all its means of grace, and manifestations of mercy, was published to the world—that in which every man should be more vitally and practically interested than in every other pursuit on earth. Everything else may a man seek and gain; the whole world may he gain, and after all, lose this supreme interest. And yet to how many, alas! will this very statement which I am making, appear technical, dry, and uninteresting!—to how many more, irrelevant to *them*, foreign to their concerns, appropriate to other persons, but a matter with which they have nothing to do! A kind of demure assent they may yield to the importance of religion, but no vital faith; nothing of that which carries them, with such vigour and decision, to the pursuit of property, pleasure, and fame.

Now, is there any difficulty in accounting for this deplorable condition of the general mind? Make religion a mystic secret, divest it of every attractive and holy charm, sever it from everything that men

already know and feel of goodness and love; tell them that they are totally depraved, totally destitute, totally ignorant: and they may "wonder and perish;" but can they rationally seek anything? Men may be very depraved, they may be extremely deficient of the right affections, as they doubtless are; but if they saw the subject in the right light, they could not be indifferent. There could not be this heavy and benumbing cloud of apathy, spreading itself over the whole world. I have seen the most vicious men, intensely conscious, conscious with mingled anger and despair, that the course of virtue is the only happy course. And do you preach to the most selfish and corrupt of men in this wise, saying, "Nothing but purity, gentleness, love, disinterestedness, can make you happy — happy in yourself, in your family, or in society; and nothing but the love of God can make you happy amidst the strifes and griefs of this life, and the solemn approaches to death;" and they know that what you say is true; they know that you are dealing with realities; and they cannot be indifferent. They may be angry; but anger is not indifference. But now, do you speak to them in a different tone and manner, and say, "You must get religion; you must experience the grace of God, in order to be happy;" and immediately their interest will subside to that state of artificial acquiescence and real apathy, which now characterizes the mass of our Christian communities.

Nor is this, save for its extent, the most affecting view of the common mistake. There are real and anxious seekers. And how are they seeking? I have been pained to see such persons—often intelligent persons—blindly groping about as for the profoundest secret. They have no distinct idea of what it is they want, what they are to obtain, what they are to do. All that they seem to know is, that it is something to be wrought in their souls, and something on which their salvation depends. They go about from one meeting to another, from one master in Israel, or from one Revival preacher, or from one experienced person to another, and say, "Tell us what this thing is, that is to be done in us; how did *you* feel when you were converted?—how was it?—how did the power of divine grace come upon you?—what was the change in that very moment when you passed from death to life?" Well, to such, may the apostolic teaching speak in this wise, "Say not who shall go up into heaven, that is to bring Christ down; or who shall go beyond the sea to bring him near?—for the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou shouldst do it." In your own heart, in the simplest convictions of right and wrong, are the teachings that you want. "This," says the apostle, "is the word of salvation which we preach; that if thou wilt believe in thy heart, and confess with thy tongue, that Jesus is the Christ, thou shalt be saved." That is, if thou wilt have a loving faith in Jesus Christ as thy guide, example, and Saviour, and carry that faith into open action, and endeavour to follow him, thou shalt be saved. In one word, if thou wilt be like Christ, if thou wilt imbibe his spirit, and imitate his excellence, thou shalt be happy; thou shalt be blessed—blessed and happy for ever. But the spirit, the loveliness of Christ, is no mystic secret. It is known and read of all men. It requires no mysterious initiation to instruct you in it. I do not object of course to seeking for light, or to seeking aid from men—from the wise and experienced; but I do object to your seeking

from them any initial or mysterious knowledge of what religion is. Let you stand alone upon a desolate island, with the Gospel in your hands; and then and there do thou read that sacred page, and pray over it, and strive patiently to bring your heart into accordance with it—to bring what is already in you — your love and trust — up to conformity with it; and you are in the way of salvation.

Oh! sad and lamentable perversion—that the greatest good in the universe, the very end of our being, the very point of all sublime human attainment, the very object for which rational and spiritual faculties were given us, should be a mystery; that the very light by which we must walk, must be utter darkness, and that all we can do is, to put out our hand and grope about in that darkness; that the very salvation, in which all the welfare of our souls is bound up, should be a dark enigma, and that all we can do is to hope that we shall some time or other know what it is! "No," says the apostle, "the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart that thou shouldst do it; *that* is the salvation which we preach."

ON THE IDENTITY OF RELIGION WITH GOODNESS, AND WITH A GOOD LIFE.

1 John iv. 20: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

From these words I propose to take up again the subject of my last discourse. I have shown that saving virtue, or whatever it be that is to save men, is commonly regarded, not as the increase or strengthening of any principle that is already in them, but as the implantation in them of a principle entirely new and before unknown. I have endeavoured to make this apparent, by a statement, in several forms, of the actual views that prevail, of religion and of obtaining religion. I have shown that with regard to religion or grace in the heart, the common feeling undoubtedly *is*, that it is a mystery—a thing which the people do not comprehend, and which they never expect to comprehend but by the experience of regeneration.

I may now observe, in addition, that all this clearly follows from the doctrine of total depravity. This doctrine asserts, that in our natural humanity there is not one particle of true religion or of saving virtue. Of course, human nature knows nothing about it. The only way in which we can come at the knowledge of moral qualities, is by feeling them in ourselves. This is an unquestioned truth in philosophy. If we have no feeling of rectitude or of religion, we can have no knowledge of it. It follows, therefore, from the doctrine of universal and total depravity, that, to the mass of men, religion, as an inward principle, must be a mystery, an enigma, a thing altogether incomprehensible.

This position—held by many Christians, but rejected by not a few, and presenting, in my opinion, the most momentous point of controversy in the Christian world—I have proposed to discuss with a freedom and seriousness proportioned to its immense importance.

With this view, I proposed to consider its bearings on the estimate and treatment of religion, the culture of religion, and its essential vitality and power.

The first of these subjects I have already examined, and I now proceed to the second.

The next topic, then, of which I was to speak, is religious culture, or what is commonly called growth in grace. I cannot dwell much upon this subject; but I must not pass it by entirely.

A mystery, a mystic secret in the heart, cannot be cultivated. A peculiar emotion, unlike all well-known and clearly-defined emotions of goodness or veneration, cannot be cultivated. It may be revived from time to time; it may be kept alive in the heart by certain processes, and they are likely to be very mechanical processes; the heart, like an electric jar, may ever and anon be charged anew with the secret power; but to such an idea of religion, *cultivation* is a word that does, in no sense, properly apply. To grow daily in kindness and gentleness, to be more and more true, honest, pure, and conscientious, to cultivate a feeling of resignation to the Divine will, and a sense of the Divine presence—all this is intelligible. But in proportion as the other idea of religion prevails, culture is out of the question. And on this principle, I am persuaded, you will find many to say, that the hour of their conversion, the hour when they received that secret and mysterious grace into their heart, was the brightest hour of their religious experience. Look then at the religious progress of such an one. I do not say that all converts are such; but suppose any one to be possessed with this idea of religion as altogether an imparted grace; and how naturally will his chief effort be, to keep that grace alive within him! And where, then, is culture? And what will be his progress? Will he be found to have been growing more generous and gentle, more candid and modest, more disinterested and self-denying, more devoted to good works, and more filled with the good spirit of God? Will those who know him best, thus take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus, and say of him, "He was very irascible and self-willed twenty years ago, but now he is very gentle and patient; he was very selfish, but now he is very generous and self-forgetting—very close and penurious, but now he is very liberal and charitable—very restless and impatient, but now he is calm, and seems to have a deep and immoveable foundation of happiness and peace—very proud and self-sufficient, but now it seems as if God and heaven were in all his thoughts, and were all his support and reason." I hope that this change of character does take place in some converts; I would that it did in many; but I must say, that in so far as a certain idea of conversion prevails—the idea of a new and mysterious grace infused into the soul—it is altogether unfavourable to such a progress.

And yet so far has this idea infected all the religion of our times, that Christianity seems nowhere to be that school of vigorous improvement which it was designed to be. Religion, if it is anything befitting our nature, is the very sphere of progress. All its means, ordinances, and institutions, have this in view, as their very end. But surely it is very obvious and very lamentable to observe, how much religious observance and effort there is, which goes entirely to waste—which does not advance the character at all. Think of our churches, our preaching, our Sabbaths—how little do they avail to make us better! How little do they seem to be thought of as seasons, means, schools of improvement! Must we not suspect that there is some error at the bottom of all this? And now suppose that men have got the notion that that something which is to prepare them for heaven is something entirely different from charity, honesty, disinterestedness, truth, self-government, and the kindly love of one another, would not this be the very notion to work that fatal mischief—the very notion to disarm conscience and

rational conversion of all their power? You will recollect that some time since, a national ship belonging to the Imaum of Muscat, visited our shores. Its officers, who I believe were intelligent men, freely mingled with our citizens, and saw something of society among us.—And what do you think was their testimony concerning us? On the point now before us it was this. They said that there is no religion among us. And what now, you will ask, was their own idea of religion? I answer, it was analogous to the very idea which I am controverting in this discourse. Religion with them was not the general improvement of the character—nothing of the kind; but a certain strictness, a certain devoutness, a particular *way* of attending to religion. Wherever these persons were found—at whatever feast or entertainment provided for them—when the hour of prayer, prescribed for Mussulmans, arrived, they courteously desired leave to retire to some private apartment, to engage in the prescribed devotions. They found not these things among us, and they said, "There is no religion in America." But do you believe that these Arabian followers of the prophet were better men than the Christian people upon whom they passed this judgment? No; you say—without denying their sincerity—that they had wrapped up all religion in certain peculiarities; and you deny, and very justly deny, that this view of religion is either just or useful. You say, on the contrary, that it is very dangerous; that it is unfriendly to the true improvement of the character; that, according to this way of thinking, a man may be a very good Mussulman and a very bad man. And this is precisely what I say of that idea of religion among ourselves which wraps it up in peculiarity; which finds its essence in certain beliefs or in certain experiences, that are quite severed from general goodness and virtue. And I say too, that according to this theory, a man may be a very good *Christian* and yet a very bad man—may consider himself pious, when he is not even a humane man—not generous nor just, nor candid nor modest, nor forbearing nor kind; in short, that he may be a man on whom falls that condemnation which the apostle pronounces on him who says, "I love God, and hateth his brother."

But now it may be said, that the doctrine which I have delivered is a very dangerous doctrine. "To tell a man," it may be said, "that there is some good in him on which he is to build; that religion consists essentially in the culture of what is already within him; that there are natural emotions of piety and goodness in him which he is to cultivate into a habit and a character; will not all this minister to self-complacency, sloth, negligence, and procrastination?" Will not the man say, "Well, I have some good in me, and I only need a little more, and I can attend to that at any time. I need not trouble myself; events, perhaps, will improve my character; and all will be well, without much effort or concern on my part. And especially, I need not go through this dreadful paroxysm of a conversion; I have nothing to do but to improve."

I might answer, that it is no new thing for a good and true doctrine to be abused. I do not know but it is abused by some among us. Indeed I fear that it is. Let me proceed at once, then, to guard against this abuse; and to show, as I have proposed, that the doctrine which I advocate is one of essential vitality and power in religion.

Let us illustrate this by one or two comparisons. You wish to teach

some man a science. Would you think it likely to awaken his zeal and earnestness, to begin by telling him, not only that he knows nothing about the science in question, but that he has no natural capacity for understanding it; that he has no elements in him of that knowledge in which you wish to instruct him; but that he must first have some special and supernatural initiation from heaven into that knowledge, and then he may advance; that till this is done, nothing is done, and that when this is done, all is done—all, that is to say, that is essential to his character as a man of science—all that is necessary to prepare him for a successful examination? Would it further your object to instruct him in this way? You wish to teach music to your pupil. You wish to arouse him to attend, and to labour for accomplishment. Would it be well to tell him that he has no musical ear, and that he can do nothing till this is given him? You desire to train a youth to high physical accomplishment, to the exercises of the gymnasium or the riding-school, to feats of strength or agility; a branch of education that deserves more attention than it is receiving among us. Would you avow to your pupil, that there is one preliminary step to be gained before you could proceed at all; that he had no muscles, no aptitude; and that until these are given him, he can do nothing. Alas! when I look at the wonderful feats of some public performers—magicians as they are called, and as they seem to the people—and when I know that all this is the result of careful and patient training, I cannot help saying, would Christians exercise themselves in this way, to what might they not attain? "And these do it," says the apostle, "for an earthly crown, but ye labour for a heavenly." Alas! I am compelled to say again—*every* school of learning seems to be more successful than the Christian school! And why?—let me ask. Have not all other schools their difficulties to surmount as well as the Christian? Why then is it that this is so lame and inefficient, but because there is some radical error at the very foundation? Let us see Christians labouring, ay, and denying themselves, as men of science and art and skill do, and should we not witness some new result?

So I contend they would labour, or at the least would be far more likely to labour, if they were put in the right way, and were impressed with the right convictions. What is the way? What are the convictions? What does our doctrine say to men? What does it say to them with regard to conversion—to progress—and to preparation for heaven?

With regard to conversion, it says, "You must *begin* the work of self-culture; resolutely and decidedly you must enter upon the Christian path. If that era of solemn determination has never come to you, then it *must* come, or you are a lost man. With a feeling as solemn, as profound, as absorbing, as ever possessed the heart of any convert to mysterious grace, you must begin. *He* may think that the saving work is done upon him in an instant; *you* must not think so. That is all an error proceeding from a false interpretation of certain figurative language of Scripture; such as "new birth," "new creation"—figurative phrases which apply to the soul, only so far as the soul's nature will admit; and it does not admit of an instant's experience being the preparation for heaven. He who has received this instantaneous communication may think, that in that moment he has got a grace, a something—a some-

thing like a password to heaven; but *you*, if you will have any reason in your religion, must not think so. If you think at all, you cannot think so. If you imagine, you may imagine what you will. And, truly, it is no moderate stretch of imagination that is here supposed. For, if an instant's experience is enough to prepare the soul for heaven, I must wonder why a life was given for it. No, in one moment we can only begin. But that beginning must nevertheless be made. What is never begun is never done. On that great resolve rests the burden of all human hope. On that great bond is set the seal of eternity. If we have never made that bond with our souls to be true and pure—if we have never taken up that resolve, I see not how we can be Christians. If all our impulses were good, we might yield ourselves up to them. If there were no temptations, we should need no purpose. If there were a tide in the ocean of life that set right towards the desired haven, we might cast ourselves upon it, and let it bear us at its will. But what would you expect, if a ship were loosened from yonder wharf, and without any course set, or any purpose to make a voyage, it were to take such fate as the winds and waves might send it? You know what its fate would be; to founder amidst the seas, or to be wrecked on the shore; it would reach no haven. And so upon the great deep of life, a moral voyage is to be made; amidst winds and waves of passion, and through clouds and storms of temptation and difficulty, the course must be held; and it will not be held, if it is not firmly set. Certainly, no man will make the voyage, unless he is determined to make it. How many launch forth upon the ocean of life without any such determination; and their ship is swayed this way and that way, by unseen currents, and is carried far astray by smooth tides and softly-breathing winds; but surely unless a time comes when the thoughtless mariner arouses himself, and directs his course, and spreads his sails for the haven, he will never reach it!

I must lay this emphatic stress upon beginning; and I would that it might be a point of personal inquiry. I will use no intrusive liberty with your thoughts; but I would say, have you begun?—have you resolved?—for there is nothing on earth so much requiring a resolve. Let not this matter, then, be wrapped in mystery. In clear reality let it stand before us; in close contact let it come to us. There is something wrong, of which the soul is conscious. The resolve required is this—to do it no more. There is some secret indulgence, some bosom sin. The resolve is, to tear that sin from the bosom, though it be dear as a right hand, or a right eye. Some duty, or course of duties, is neglected; the resolve is, to set about it, this day, this hour. In short, the resolve is, a great, strong, substantial purpose to do right in all things; it is to set up the standard of duty, as that beneath which we will walk all our life through; to give our hearts, without any reserve, to God, to truth, and sanctity, and goodness.

This is what our doctrine says in regard to conversion. And now what does it say on the subject of progress? Does the message which it delivers minister to sloth, negligence, or procrastination? What does it say? Your life's work is growth in goodness and piety. It is a daily work, or it is no work at all. Every day, you must advance. Practical religion is self-culture. God has given you a natural piety, and a natural benevolence, as he has given you a natural reason. With one

as with the other, your business is culture. The seed is in you, as the seed of the common harvest is in the soil. Everything depends on culture. Does it discourage the industry of the husbandman, to tell him that the seed is provided, and planted in the earth?—that there is a germ that will grow if he will take care of it. Nay, that is the very reason why he will work. Or does he refuse to work because it is necessary that God's sun and air quicken the soil? And why any more that God's spirit must shine and breathe upon his soul?

In this rational and generous self-culture, is the secret of spiritual strength. There is nothing which most men so much feel as the want of vitality and earnestness in their religion. Their talk about it is dull and mournful; their prayers are cold and reluctant; their interest is languid, their Sabbaths and their religious meetings in conference-rooms and schoolhouses, are heavy and sluggish!—And why is all this? Because—provided they are sincere—their views of religion are irrational, mystical, essentially uninteresting; because the thing in question is severed from the living fountains of all true emotion. Let me state it to you thus. You have a friend—a dear and lovely friend; and towards that being your affections are not dull and sluggish. But why is that friend dear and lovely? Because generous and noble-hearted, kind and gentle, full of disinterestedness, and purity, and truth? Then I tell you that your friendship is a part of religion. It is of the same nature as religion. It is no other than a portion of the beauty of the divinity that is shed forth in the heart of your friend. Again, you have an enthusiasm for all that is morally sublime and beautiful. The patriot that dies for his country; the martyr that calmly goes to the stake, when one word, one little word uttered, will give him life, and fortune, and splendour, and he will not speak that false word; the patient and heroic sufferer amidst pain and calamity; the great sufferer when he breathed the prayer, "Father, forgive them!"—these win admiration, draw tears from you perhaps, as you think of them. And again, I tell you that this is a part of religion. Once more you have an interest in this matter. Surely you would be happy. Uneasiness, destitution, self-inflicted pain, are hard things to bear. But was ever a soul—full of the love of God, full of kindness and gentleness, full of serenity and trust—was ever such a soul essentially unhappy? How then can fainting and famishing creatures gather in converse around this fountain of all healing and comfort, and not be thrilled with inexpressible emotion? Let me suggest one more thought. There is one great Being who is the first and chiefest object of religion—God! And God is everywhere. Can there be indifference where it is felt that God is? And he is everywhere. In the crowded meeting, in the lonely and retired walk, in the ever lovely, holy and beautiful nature that is spread around you, in the silent and star-lit dome of heaven, and beneath your humble roof, in all that fills it with comfort and joy and hope, ay, or touches it with disciplinary sorrow—in all, God is: the nearest, the holiest; the greatest, the kindest of beings; and can indifference live in that sublime and blessed presence?

Now what is religion? It is not merely to feel all this, at certain times and seasons, but it is to make it the reigning habit of our minds. To feel it is comparatively easy; to form it into the very structure of our souls, is quite another thing. I cannot very well understand how

any man should want the feeling; but I can very well understand how he should want the character. For this it is precisely, that is the greatest and rarest of all human attainments. This it is, to have Christ formed within us, the hope of glory. Jesus, the blessed Master, lived that perfect life. In him each good affection of the great humanity had its fulness, its permanence, its perfection. How reverend, how holy, how dear, how soul-entrancing is that incarnate loveliness—God in him, God with us; the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person! Oh! could we be like him, all our ungoverned agitations, all our vain longings, all our distracting passions, all our needless griefs and pains, would die away from us; and we should be freed from the heavy, heavy burden of our sins! I almost fear, my friends, so to express myself; lest it should be construed into the hackneyed and whining lamentation of the pulpit, and should win no respect, no sympathy from you. No, it is with a manly grief, with an indignant sorrow and shame, that every one of us should lament, that he has not more unreservedly followed the great and glorious Master!

And let me add that this is no visionary nor impracticable undertaking. It is what we all can do, with God's help, if we will. It is what is bound upon us, by the simplest perceptions of rectitude in our own souls—bound upon us by the very feelings of conscience and obligation which God has implanted within us.

Finally, it is what we must do, if we would attain to happiness here or hereafter. The hours are stealing on, when the veil of eternity shall part its awful folds, and the great and dread hereafter shall receive us. Solemn will be that hour! Lightly do we hear of its daily coming to one and another around us now; little do we think of what it was to them; but so will not be its coming—with lightness or with little thought—so will not be its coming to us. The gathering and swelling thoughts of that hour—no one can know but he who has felt it drawing nigh. Earth recedes; and earth's ambition, gain, pleasure, vanity, shrinks to nothing; and one thought spreads all around and fills the expanding horizon of eternity—am I ready?—have I lived so as to meet this hour? And believe me, in no court of human theology must that question be answered. No imaginary robe of another's righteousness—I speak not now of God's mercy in Christ; that, we may be sure, will be all that mercy consistently can be—no mystic grace claiming superiority to all deeds of mercy and truth, no narrow, technical hope of salvation garnered up in the heart, will avail us there; but the all-deciding question will be—what were we? and what have we done? What were we, in the whole breadth and length of all our good or all our bad affections? That awful question we must answer for ourselves. No one shall be there to answer for us. No answer shall be given in there, but that which comes from every day and hour of our lives. For there is not a day nor an hour of our lives, but it contributes to make us better or worse; it has borne the stamp of our culture or carelessness, of our fidelity or our neglect. And that stamp, which our life's experience sets upon our character, is—I speak not my own word, but God's word—that stamp is the very seal of retribution.

Does this seem, my friends, but a sad and stern conclusion of the matter; not encouraging to our hopes, nor accordant with the mercy of the Gospel? The Gospel! Is it a system of evasions, and subterfuges,

and palliatives, to ease off the strict demand of holiness? No, let theology boast of such devices, and tell men that as they have sowed so shall they *not* reap; but believe me, the Gospel is the last thing to break the everlasting bond that connects happiness with goodness, with purity. And who would have it otherwise? Who *would* be happy, but on condition of being good, and in proportion as he is good? What true man asks, that over his corrupt and guilty heart, while such, may be poured a flood of perfect bliss? Our nature may be fallen and low; but that flood would sweep away the last vestige of all its honour and worth.—God never created a thing so vile as that would be. No, it is a noble being that he has given us, though alas! it be marred and degraded; and upon the eternal laws of that being, must we build up our welfare. It is a glorious privilege so to do; to do what the noble apostle spoke of as his own law and hope, when he said—and, be assured, that must be our law and hope—"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me in that day; and not to me only, but to all who love his appearing."

THE CALL OF HUMANITY, AND THE ANSWER TO IT.

Job xxiii. 3—5: "Oh! that I knew where I might find him; that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say to me."

It is striking to observe, how large a part of the book of Job, and especially of Job's own meditation, is occupied with a consideration of the nature and character of the Supreme Being. The subject-matter of the book is human calamity. The point proposed for solution is the interpretation of that calamity. The immediate question—of very little interest now, perhaps, but one of urgent difficulty in a darker age—is, whether calamity is retributive; whether, in proportion as a man is afflicted, he is to be accounted a bad man. Job contends against this principle, and the controversy with his friends turns upon this point. But as I have already remarked, it is striking to observe how often his mind rises apparently quite above the controversy, to a sublime meditation on God. As if, feeling, that provided he could fix his trust there, he should be strong and triumphant, thither he continually resorts. With these loftier soarings, are mingled it is true, passionate complaint, and sad despondency, and bitter reproaches against his friends, and painful questionings about the whole order of Providence. It is indeed a touching picture of a mind in distress—with its sad fluctuations; its words of grief and haste bursting into the midst of its words of prayer; its soarings and sinkings; its passionate and familiar adjurations of heaven and earth to help it—and with the world of dark and undefined thoughts, which roll through it like waves of chaos; in short, it is a picture whose truth can be realised only by experience.

But I was about to observe, that this tendency of Job's mind to the Supreme, though it may seem to carry him, at times, up quite out of sight of the question in hand, is really a natural tendency, and that it naturally sprung from the circumstances in which he was placed. The human condition is, throughout, allied to a divine Power; and the strong feeling of what this condition is, always leads us to that Power. The positive good and evil of this condition, therefore, have especially this tendency. This is implied in the proem or preface of the book of Job; which gives an account, after the dramatic manner which characterizes the whole book, of the circumstances that led to Job's trial. After a

brief prefatory statement informing the reader who Job was, and what were his possessions, the scene is represented as opening in heaven. Among the sons of God Satan presents himself—the Accuser, the Adversary. And when Job's virtue is the theme of commendation, the Accuser says, "Doth Job fear God for naught!—a grand emir of the east—cradled in luxury—loaded with the benefits of heaven—doth he fear God for naught? Put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face!" It is done; and Job is stripped of his possessions, servants, children—all. And Job falls down upon the ground and worships; and says, "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

But again the Accuser says—thou hast not laid thine hand yet upon his person. Come yet nearer; "put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face." Again it is done; and Job is smitten and overwhelmed with disease: and he sits down in ashes, and scrapes himself with a potsherd—a pitiable and loathsome object. The faith of his wife, too, gives way—of her who, above all, should have supported him then; but who, from the reverence and love which she felt for her husband, is least able to bear the sight of his misery. She *cannot* bear it: and partaking of the prevalent feelings of the age about outward prosperity, as the very measure and test of the Divine favour, she says, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die!" "Give up the strife; you have been a good man; you have helped and comforted many; and now you are reduced to this Give up the strife; curse God and die!" And Job answered, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh!" What nature! We seem to hear that fireside conversation. What nature, and what delicacy mingled with reproof! "Thou speakest not as my wife, but as one of the foolish, prating women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil! In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

Then the three friends of Job came to him; and it is a beautiful trait of delicacy for those ancient times, that these friends, according to the representation, "sat down upon the ground with him seven days and seven nights, and *spake not a word unto him;* for they saw that his grief was great." When we recollect that all over the East, loud wailings and lamentations were the usual modes of testifying sympathy, we are led to ask, whence came—whence, but from inspiration—this finer conception, befitting the utmost culture and delicacy of later times? "Seven days and seven nights they sat with him, and none of them spake a word to him." Of course, we are not to take this too literally. According to the Hebrew custom, they mourned with him seven days: that is, they were in his house, and they came, doubtless, and sat with him from time to time; but they entered into no large discourse with him; they saw that it was not the time for many words; they mourned in silence.

This I have said is a beautiful conception of what belongs to the most delicate and touching sympathy. There comes a time to speak, and so the friends of Job judged; though their speech proved less delicate and judicious than their silence. There comes a time to speak; there are circumstances which may make it desirable; there are easy and unforced modes of address which may make it grateful; there are cases

where a thoughtful man may help his neighbour with his wisdom, or an affectionate man may comfort him with sympathy; "a word fitly spoken," says the sacred proverbialist, "is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

And yet, after all, it seems to me that words can go but a little way into the depths of affliction. The thoughts that struggle there in silence; that go out into the silence of infinitude—into the silence of eternity—have no emblems. Thoughts enough, God knoweth, come there—such as no tongue ever uttered. And those thoughts do not so much want human sympathy, as they want higher help. I deny not the sweetness of that balm; but I say that something higher is wanted. The sympathy of all good friends, too, we know that we have, without a word spoken. And moreover, the sympathy of all the world, though grateful, would not lighten the load one feather's weight. Something else the mind wants—something to rest upon. There is a loneliness in deep sorrow, to which God only can draw near. Its prayer is emphatically "the prayer of a lonely heart." Alone, the mind is wrestling with the great problem of calamity, and the solution it asks from the infinite providence of heaven. Did I not rightly say, then, that calamity directly leads us to God; and that the tendency, so apparent in the mind of Job, to lift itself up to that exalted theme of contemplation was natural? And it is natural, too, that the one book of affliction, given us in the holy record—the one book wholly devoted to that subject—is, throughout, and almost entirely, a meditation on God.

I wish to speak, in the present season of meditation, of this tendency of the mind, amidst the trials and distresses of life, to things superior to itself, and especially to the Supreme Being. It is not affliction of which I am to speak, but of that to which it leads. My theme is, the natural aspiration of humanity to things above and beyond it, and the revealings from above to that aspiration; it is, in other words, the call of humanity and the answer to it. "I would order my cause before him," says Job, "I would know the words he would answer me."

There are many things in us, of which we are not distinctly conscious; and it is one office of every great ministration to human nature, whether its vehicle be the pen, the pencil, or the tongue, to waken that slumbering consciousness into life. And so do I think that it is one office of the pulpit. That inmost consciousness—were it called forth from the dim cells in the soul, where it sleeps—how instantly would it turn to a waking and spiritual reality, that life, which is now, to many, a state so dull and worldly, so uninteresting and unprofitable!

How it should be such to any, seems to me, I confess, a thing almost inconceivable. It may be, because my life is, as I may say, professionally, a meditation upon themes of the most spiritual and quickening interest. Certainly, I do not lay any claim to superior purity, for seeming to myself to see things as they are. But surely, this life, instead of being anything negative or indifferent, instead of being anything dull and trivial, seems to me, I was ready to say, as if it were bound up with mystery, and agony, and rapture. Yes, rapture as well as agony—the rapture of love, of reciprocated affection, of hope, of joy, of prayer—and the agony of pain, of loss, of bereavement—and over all their strugglings, the dark cloud of mystery. If any one is unconscious of the intensity and awfulness of this life within him, I believe it

is because he does not know what he is all the while feeling. Health and sickness, joy and sorrow, success and disappointment, life and death, are familiar words upon his lips, and he does not know to what depths they point within him. It is just as a man may live, unconscious that there is anything unusual about him, in this age of unprecedented excitement—in this very crisis of the world's story.

Indeed, a man seems never to know what anything means till he has lost it; and this, I suppose, is the reason why losses—vanishings away of things—are among the teachings of this world of shadows. The substance, indeed, teacheth; but the vacuity, whence it has disappeared, yet more. Many an organ, many a nerve and fibre, in our bodily frame, performs its silent part for years, and leaves us almost, or quite, unconscious of its value. But let there be the smallest injury, the slightest cut of a knife, which touches that organ, or severs the fibre—and then we find, though it be the point of our finger, that we want it continually; then we discover its value; then we learn, that the fine and invisible nerves that spread themselves all over this wonderful frame, are a significant handwriting of divine wisdom. And thus it is with the universal frame of things in life. One would think that the blessings of this world were sufficiently valued; but, after all, the full significancy of those words, property, ease, health—the wealth of meaning that lies in the fond epithets, parent, child, friend—we never know till they are taken away; till in place of the bright, visible being, comes the awful and desolate shadow where nothing is—where we stretch out our hands in vain, and strain our eyes upon dark and dismal vacuity. Still, in that vacuity we do not *lose* the object that we loved; it only becomes more real to us. Thus do blessings not only brighten when they depart, but are fixed in enduring reality; and friendship itself, receives its everlasting seal beneath the cold impress of death.

I have said thus much for the sake of illustration—of suggestion—to show you that the imprint of things may be upon us, which we scarcely know; to intimate to you—what I believe—that a dim consciousness of infinite mystery and grandeur lies beneath all this common-place of life; yes, and to arouse even the most irreligious worldliness, by the awfulness and majesty that are around it. As I have seen a rude peasant from the Apennines, falling asleep at the foot of a pillar in one of the majestic Roman churches—doubtless the choral symphonies yet fell soft upon his ear, and the gilded arches were yet dimly seen through the half-slumbering eyelids—so, I think, it is often with the repose and the very stupor of worldliness. It cannot quite lose the sense of where it is, and of what is above and around it.

The scene of its actual engagements may be small; the paths of its steps beaten and familiar; the objects it handles easily spanned, and quite worn out with daily uses. So it may be, and amidst such things that we all live. So we live our little life; but heaven is above us; and eternity is before us, and behind us; and suns and stars are silent witnesses and watchers over us. Not to speak fancifully of what is matter of fact—do you not always feel that you are enfolded by infinity?—infinite powers, infinite spaces—do they not lie all around you? Is not the dread arch of mystery spread over you—and no voice ever pierced it? Is not eternity enthroned amidst yonder starry heights—and no utterance, no word ever came from those far-lying and

silent spaces? Oh! it is strange—to think of that awful majesty above, and then to think of what is beneath it; this little struggle of life—this poor day's conflict—this busy ant-hill of a city. Shut down the dome of heaven close upon it; let it crush and confine every thought to the present spot, to the present instant; and such would a city be. But now, how is it? Ascend the lonely watch-tower of evening meditation, and look forth and listen; and lo! the talk of the streets, the sounds of music and revelling, the stir and tread of a multitude, goeth up into the silent and all-surrounding infinitude!

But is it the audible sound only that goeth up? Oh! no; but amidst the stir and noise of visible life—from the inmost bosom of the visible man, there goeth up a call, a cry, an asking, unuttered, unutterable—an asking for revelation—saying, in almost speechless agony—"Oh! break, dread arch of mystery!—tell us, ye stars, that roll above the waves of mortal trouble—speak! enthroned majesty of those awful heights—bow down your mysterious and reserved heavens, and come near—tell us, what ye only know—tell us of the loved and lost—tell us what we are, and whither we are going!"

Is not man such an one? Is he not encompassed with a dome of incomprehensible wonders? Is there not that, in him and about him, which should fill his life with majesty and sacredness? Is there not something of sublimity and sacredness thus borne down from heaven, into the heart of every man? Where is the being so base and abandoned but he hath some traits of that sacredness left upon him—something so much in discordance perhaps with his general repute, that he hides it from all around him—some sanctuary in his soul, where no one may enter—some sacred enclosure, where the memory of a child is, or the image of a venerated parent, or the echo of some sweet word of kindness that was once spoken to him—an echo that shall never die away!

Would man awake to the higher and better things that are in him, he would no longer feel, I repeat, that life to him is a negative, or superficial, or worldly existence. Evermore are his steps haunted with thoughts far beyond their own range—which some have regarded as the reminiscences of a pre-existent state. As a man who passeth a season in the sad and pleasant land of Italy, feels a majestic presence of sublime ages and histories with him, which he does not always distinctly recognise, but which lend an indescribable interest to every field, and mountain, and mouldering wall, and make life to be, all the while, more than mere life; so it is with us all, in the beaten and worn track of this worldly pilgrimage. There is more here than the world we live in; it is not all of life to live. An unseen and infinite presence is here; a sense of something greater than we possess; a seeking, through all the void waste of life, for a good beyond it; a crying out of the heart for interpretation; a memory of the dead, which touches, ever and anon, some vibrating thread in this great tissue of mystery.

I cannot help thinking, that we all, not only have better intimations, but are capable of better things than we know; that the pressure of some great emergency would develop in us powers, beyond the worldly bias of our spirits; and that, so heaven dealeth with us, from time to time, as to call forth those better things. Perhaps there is not a family so selfish in the world, but that if one in it were doomed to die—if

tyranny demanded a victim, it would be utterly impossible for its members—parents and children—to choose out that victim; but that all and each one would say, "I will die, but I cannot choose." Nay, in how many families—if that dire extremity had come—would one and another step forth, freed from the wild meshes of ordinary selfishness, and say, like the Roman father and son, "Let the blow fall on me!" There are greater and better things in us all, than the world takes account of, or than *we* take note of, would we find them out. And it is one part of our spiritual culture to *find* these traits of greatness and power, to revive these faded impressions of generosity and goodness —the almost squandered bequests of God's love and kindness to our souls,—and to yield ourselves to their guidance and control.

I am sensible that my discoursing now has been somewhat desultory and vague. Perhaps, though I delight not in such discoursing generally, it has not been, in this instance, without a purpose. For the consciousness which I wish to address, is doubtless itself something too shadowy and vague. But it is real, though indistinct. An unsatisfied asking is, for ever, in all human hearts. We know that the material crust of this earth does not limit our thoughts; that the common-place of life does not suffice us; that there are things in us, which go far beyond the range of our ordinary, earthly pursuits. Depraved as we may be, these things are true. They are indeed signs that we are fallen: but they are signs too that all is not lost. They are significant revelations; and they are admonitions no less powerful.

But now, when our minds go out beyond the range of their visible action, what do they find? We have spoken of the great call of humanity; what is the answer?

The first answer comes from the mind itself. When we descend into the depths of our own being, we find desires which nothing less than the infinite can satisfy, powers fitted for everlasting expansion—powers whose unfolding at every step, only awakens new and vaster cravings; and sorrows, which all the accumulated wealth and pleasure of the world can never, never soothe. If a man's life consisted in that which he possesseth, how intolerable would it be! To be confined to what we have and what we are, is to be shut up in a dungeon, where we cannot breathe! Is not this whole nature then itself a stupendous argument for something greater to come? Is not this very consciousness, deep in our souls, itself an answer? When you look at the embryo bird in the shell, you know that it is made to burst that little prison. You see feet that are made to run, and wings to fly. And as it pecks at the imprisoning shell, you see in that very impulse, the prophetic certainty that it is to come forth to light and air. And is the noblest being on earth alone to be for ever imprisoned—to perish in his prison;—for ever to feel himself imprisoned—for ever to press against the barriers of his present knowledge and existence; and never to go forth? Are *man's* embryo powers alone—are *his* cravings and aspirations after something higher, to be accounted no revealings, no prophecies of a loftier destiny?

And again; when we lift up our thoughts to the vast infinitude, what do we find? Order, holding its sublime reign among the countless revolving suns and systems; and light, fair and beautiful, covering all as with a garment. Look up to the height of heaven in some bright and smiling summer's day; behold the ethereal softness, the meteor of

beauty that hangs over us; and does it not seem as if it were an enfolding gentleness—a silent, hushed breathing of unutterable love? Was ever a mother's eye, bent on her child, more sweet and gentle? Was ever a loving countenance more full of ineffable meaning? "Oh! you sweet heavens!" hath many a poet said; and can he who made those heavens, sublime and beautiful, wish us any harm? Were *you* made lord of those heavens—could you hurl down unrecking sorrow and disaster upon the poor tremblers beneath you? God who hath breathed that pitying and generous thought into your heart, will not belie it in himself. My heart is to me a revelation, and heaven is to me a revelation of God's benignity. And when the voices of human want and sorrow go upward—as one has touchingly said, "like inarticulate cries, and sobbings of a dumb creature, which, in the ear of heaven are prayers"—I can no more doubt that they find gracious consideration and pity above, than if a voice of unearthly tenderness breathed from the sky, saying, "Poor frail beings! borne on the bosom of imperfection, and laid upon the lap of sorrow—be patient and hopeful; ye are not neglected nor forgotten; the heaven above you holds itself in majestic reserve, because ye cannot yet bear what it has to tell you—holds you in solemn suspense, which death only may break; be faithful unto death—be trustful for a while; and all your lofty asking shall have answer, and all your patient sorrow shall find issue, in everlasting peace."

But once more; there is more than a voice; there is a revelation in nature, and especially in the mission of Jesus Christ, more touching than words.

I have said that there is no uttered speech, from all around us; and yet have maintained that there is expression as clear and emphatic as speech; and I now say, it is more expressive than speech. Let me observe here, that we are liable to lay quite an undue stress upon this mode of communication—upon speech; simply because speech is the ordained and ordinary vehicle of converse between man and man. If men had communicated with one another by pantomime; if forms, and not utterances, had been the grand instruments of impression; if human love had always been expressed only by a brighter glow of the countenance, and pity only by a softer shadowing upon its beauty,—then had we better understood, perhaps, the grand communication of nature. Then had the bright sky in the daytime, and the soft veil of evening, and all the shows of things, around the whole dome of heaven, and amidst the splendour and beauty of the world—all these, I say, in the majesty of silence, had been a revelation, not only the clearest, but the most impressive that was possible. I say, in the majesty of silence. For, accustomed as we are are to speech, how much more powerful, in some things, is silence! How intolerable would it have been, if every day, when it came, had audibly said, "God is good;" and every evening, when it stole upon us, had said, "God is good;" and every cloud when it rose, and every tree as it blossomed, and every plant as it sprung from the earth, had audibly said, "God is good"? No; the silence of nature is more impressive, would we understand it, than any speech could be; it expresses what no speech can utter. No bare word can tell what that bright sky meaneth; what the wealth of nature meaneth; what is the heart's own deep assurance, that God is good.

But yet more; in the express revelation that is given us, it is not

the bare word spoken that is most powerful; it is the character of interposing mercy that is spread all over the volume. It is the miracle that causes nature to break the secret of an all-controlling power, in that awful pause and silence. It is the loving and living excellence of Jesus —that miracle of his life, more than all. The word is but an attestation to something done. Had it been done in silence—could all generations have *seen* Jesus living—Jesus suffering—and heaven opened—it had been enough. Words are but the testimony, that hath gone forth to all generations and all ages, of what hath been *done*. God *is* ever *doing* for us, what—be it said reverently—what he cannot speak. As a dear friend can look the love which he cannot utter, so do I read the face of nature; so do I read the record of God's interposing mercy. I feel myself embraced with a kindness, too tender and strong for utterance. It cannot *tell* me how dear to the Infinite love, my welfare, my purity is. Only by means and ministrations, by blessings and trials, by dealings and pressures of its gracious hand upon me, can it make me know. So do I read the volume of life and nature; and so do I read the volume of revelation. I see in Jesus living—in Jesus suffering—I see in the deep heart of his pain and patience, and love and pity, what no words can utter. I learn this not from any excellency of speech, but from the excellency of his living and suffering. Even in the human breast, the deepest things, are things which it can never utter. So it was in the heart of Jesus. So it is—I speak it reverently—in the nature of God. "For no ear hath ever heard the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them to us by his spirit; for the spirit—and the spirit alone—searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

DISCOURSES AND DISCUSSIONS

IN

EXPLANATION AND DEFENCE

OF

UNITARIANISM.

PREFACE.

The Volume, here offered to the public, is designed to give a comprehensive reply to the question,—What is Unitarianism? No book, within the Author's knowledge, answers the purpose of a general summary of the views entertained by Unitarians, and of the arguments which may be adduced in their defence. Many persons, it is believed, have felt the want of something of this nature,—something beyond the brief compass of a Tract, and within the limits of a Volume,—which they could give or point out, to those who are asking,—"What are your general views of religion? What are your views of the Scriptures,—of faith in them,—and of the doctrines and principles which they teach?" Such inquirers are often not sufficiently interested, to gather the information they seek from scattered tracts, or to hunt for it through twenty volumes; nor, if they were, is it likely that the tracts or volumes would be within their reach. The present volume will, perhaps, satisfy the questions that are already in their minds; and if it raises questions which it does not settle, they must be referred to other sources. In particular, reference may be made,—on the Trinity, to Norton's Statement of Reasons; on the Offices of Christ, to Ware's Discourses; on the general subject, to Sparks' Inquiry, Yates' Vindication, and the Works of Channing; and for our practical views of religion, to the Discourses of Freeman, Buckminster, Thatcher, Abbot, Parker, and Cappe, besides those of many living writers.

One word further the Author may be permitted to say of the manner in which this volume is made up. It consists partly of discourses not before published, and partly of reprints of former publications. Of the latter kind are chiefly two series of papers, entitled "Cursory Observations on the Questions at issue between Orthodox and Liberal Christians;" and "The Analogy of Religion with other Subjects." The last has been entirely re-written, and the first altered and revised.

In short, the Author's purpose, in this volume, has been, in the first place, to offer a very brief summary of the Unitarian Belief; in the next place, to lay down the essential principles of all religious faith; thirdly, to state and defend our construction, as it is generally held among us, of the Christian doctrines; fourthly, to illustrate, by analogy, our views of practical religion; and finally, in two closing sermons, to discuss the true proportion and harmony of the Christian character. With this brief statement, the work is submitted to the reader.

New York, December 2, 1839.

THE UNITARIAN BELIEF.

We shall undertake to state, in this article, what we understand to be the prevailing belief of Unitarian Christians. Our position as a religious body seems still to require statements of this nature. It is a position, that is to say, entirely misunderstood. Misconstructions, once in vogue, seem to have a strange power of perpetuating themselves; or, at any rate, they are helped on by powers that seem to us very strange. In the face of a thousand denials, and in spite of the self-contradicting absurdity of the charge, it is still said, and, by multitudes, seems to be thought, that our creed consists of negations, that we believe in almost nothing. It seems to be received as if it were a matter of common consent, that we do not hold to the doctrines of the Bible, and that we scarcely pretend to hold to the Bible itself. It is apparently supposed by many, that we stand upon peculiar ground in this respect; that we hold some strange position in the Christian world, different from all other Christian denominations.

We must, therefore, if our patience fail not, explain ourselves again and again. We must, again and again, implore others to make distinctions very obvious indeed, but which they are strangely slow to see,—to distinguish, that is to say, or at least to remember that *we* distinguish, between the Bible and fallible interpretations, between Scripture doctrines and the explanations of those doctrines. The former we receive: the latter only do we reject.

Our position in the Christian world is not a singular one. We profess to stand upon the same ground as all other Christians,—the Bible. Our position, considered as dissent,—our position, as assailed on all sides, is by no means a novel one. The Protestants were, and are, charged by the Romish Church with rejecting Christianity. Every sect in succession that has broken off from the body of Christians,—the Lutherans and English Episcopalians first, then the Scotch Presbyterians, then the Baptists, the Methodists, the Quakers, the Puritans, the Independents of every name,—have been obliged to reply to the same charge of holding no valid nor authorized belief. And what has been the answer of them all? It has been the answer of Paul before Felix,—that they did believe; that they "believed all things that are written" in the holy volume.

This same defence, namely, Paul's defence to the Jews, Luther's and Wickliffe's to the Romish Church,—the defence of Knox, of Robinson, of Fox, of Wesley, and Whitfield, and of our own Mayhew and Mathers to the English Church,—this same defence, it has fallen

to our lot to plead as Unitarian Christians. We bear a new name; but we take an old stand,—a stand old as Christianity. We bear a new name, but we make an old defence; we think, as every other class of Christians have thought, that we approach the nearest to the old primitive Christianity. We bear a hard name, the name of heretics; but it is the very name which Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Arminians, Calvinists, have once borne,—which all Protestant Orthodoxy has once borne,—which Paul himself bore, when he said, "After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers." We bear a new name; and a new name draws suspicion upon it, as every Christian sect has had occasion full well to know; and we think, therefore, that our position and our plea demand some consideration and sympathy from the body of Christians. We think that they ought to listen to us, when we make the plea, once their own, that we believe, according to our honest understanding of their import, all things that are written in the Holy Scriptures.

There is one circumstance which makes the statement of this defence peculiarly pertinent and proper for *us*. And that is, the delicacy which has been felt by our writers and preachers about the use of terms. When we found, for instance, that the phrase, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," and that the words *atonement, regeneration, election,* with some others, were appropriated by the popular creeds, and stood in prevailing usage, for orthodox doctrines, we hesitated about the free use of them. It was not because we hesitated about the meaning which Scripture gave to them, but about the meaning which common usage had fixed upon them. We believed in the things themselves, we believed in the words as they stood in the Bible, but not as they stood in other books. But finding that, whenever we used these terms, we were charged, as even our great Master himself was, with "deceiving the people," and not anxious to dispute about words, we gave up the familiar use of a portion of the Scriptural phraseology. Whether we ought, in justice to ourselves, so to have done, is not now the question. We did so; and the consequence has been, that the body of the people, not often hearing from our pulpits the contested words and phrases; not often hearing the words, *propitiation, sacrifice, the natural man, the new birth,* and *the Spirit of God,*—hold themselves doubly warranted in charging us with a defection from the faith of Scripture. It is this state of things which makes it especially pertinent and proper for us, as we have said, distinctly to declare not only our belief in the Scriptures generally, but our belief in what the Scriptures teach on the points in controversy,—our belief, we repeat, in what the Scriptures mean by the phrase, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," and by the words, *atonement, conversion, election,* and others that stand for disputed doctrines.

To some statements of this nature, then, we now invite attention; only premising further, that it is no part of our purpose, within the brief limits of this exposition, to set forth anything of that abundant argument for our views of Christianity, which so powerfully convinces us that they are true. Our object, at present, is limited to statement and explanation. We would present the Unitarian creed, according to our own understanding of it.

With this object in view, we say, in general, that we believe in the Scriptures.

On a point which is so plain, and ought to be so well understood as this, it is unnecessary to dwell, unless it be for the purpose of discrimination. If any one thinks it necessary to a reception of the Bible as a revelation from God, that the inspired penmen should have written by immediate dictation; if he thinks that the writers were mere amanuenses, and that word after word was put down by instant suggestion from above; that the very style is divine and not human; that the style, we say, and the matters of style, — the figures, the metaphors, the illustrations, came from the Divine mind, and not from human minds; we say, at once and plainly, that we do not regard the Scriptures as setting forth any claims to such supernatural perfection, or accuracy of style. It is not a kind of distinction that would add anything to the authority, much less to the dignity, of a communication from heaven. Nay, it would detract from its power, to deprive it, by any hypothesis, of those touches of nature, of that natural pathos, simplicity, and imagination, and of that solemn grandeur of thought, disregarding style, of which the Bible is full. Enough is it for us, that the matter is divine, the doctrines true, the history authentic, the miracles real, the promises glorious, the threatenings fearful. Enough, that all is gloriously and fearfully true, — true to the Divine will, true to human nature, true to its wants, anxieties, sorrows, sins, and solemn destinies. Enough, that the seal of a divine and miraculous communication is set upon that Holy Book.

So we receive it. So we believe in it. And there is many a record on those inspired pages, which he who believes therein would not exchange, — no, he would not exchange it, a simple sentence though it be, for the wealth of worlds.

That God Almighty, the Infinite Creator and Father, hath spoken to the world; that He who speaks indeed, in all the voices of nature and life, but speaks there generally, and leaves all to inference, — that he hath spoken to man distinctly, and, as it were, individually, — spoken with a voice of interpretation for life's mysteries, and of guidance amidst its errors, and of comfort for its sorrows, and of pardon for its sins, and of hope, undying hope, beyond the grave; — this is a fact, compared with which all other facts are not worth believing in; this is an event, so interesting, so transcendent, transporting, sublime, as to leave to all other events the character only of things ordinary and indifferent.

But let us pass from the general truth of this record to some of its particular doctrines. Our attention here will be confined to the New Testament.

I. And we say, in the first place, that we believe "in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost." This was the simple primitive creed of the Christians; and it were well if men had been content to receive it in its simplicity. As a creed, it was directed to be introduced into the form of baptism. The rite of baptism was appropriated to the profession of Christianity. The converts were to be baptized into the acknowledgment of the Christian religion; "baptized into the name," that is, into the acknowledgment, "of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

This creed consists of three parts. It contains no proof, nor hint, of the doctrine of a Trinity. We might as well say, that any other three

points of belief are one point. The creed consists of three parts; and these parts embrace the grand peculiarities of the Christian religion; and it is for this reason as we conceive, and for no other, that they are introduced into the primitive form of a profession of Christianity.

The first tenet is, that God is a paternal Being; that he has an interest in his creatures, such as is expressed in the title *Father;* an interest unknown to all the systems of Paganism, untaught in all the theories of philosophy; an interest, not only in the glorious beings of other spheres, the sons of light, the dwellers in heavenly worlds, but in us, poor, ignorant, and unworthy as we are; that he has pity for the erring, pardon for the guilty, love for the pure, kindness for the humble, and promises of immortal and blessed life for those who trust and obey him. God, — yes, the God of boundless worlds and infinite systems, is our Father. How many, in Christian lands, have not yet learned this first truth of the Christian faith!

The second article in the Christian's creed is, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; not God himself, but his image, his brightest manifestation; the teacher of his truth, the messenger of his will; the mediator between God and men; the sacrifice for sin, and the Saviour from it; the conqueror of death, the forerunner into eternity, where he evermore liveth to make intercession for us. We are not about to argue; but we cannot help remarking, as we pass, how obvious it is, that in none of these offices can Jesus be regarded as God. If he *is* God in his *nature*, yet as Mediator between God and man, we say he cannot be *regarded* as God.

The third object of our belief, introduced into the primitive creed, is the Holy Ghost; in other words, that power of God, that divine influence, by which Christianity was established through miraculous aids, and by which its spirit is still shed abroad in the hearts of men. This tenet, as we understand it, requires our belief in miracles, and in gracious interpositions of God, for the support and triumph of Christian faith and virtue.

Let us add, that these three, with the addition of the doctrine of a future life, are the grand points of faith which are set forth in the earliest uninspired creed on record; commonly called "The Apostles' Creed. Its language is, "I believe in God the Father Almighty; and in Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son, our Lord; who was born of the Holy Ghost and Virgin Mary; and was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and was buried; and, the third day, rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth on the right hand of the Father; whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead; and in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Church; the remission of sins; and the resurrection of the flesh." Not a word here of "co-equal Son," as in the Nicene Creed; not a word of "Trinity," as in the Athanasian. Things approach nearer, it should seem, to the simplicity of the Gospel, as they approach nearer to its date. To that simplicity of faith, then, we hold fast. On that primitive and beautiful record of doctrine we put our hand and place our reliance. We believe "in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost." May the Father Almighty have mercy upon us! May the Son of God redeem us from guilt, from misery, and from hell! May the Holy Ghost sanctify and save us!

From this general creed, let us now proceed to particular doctrines.

II. We believe in the Atonement. That is to say, we believe in what that word, and similar words, mean, in the New Testament. We take not the responsibility of supporting the popular interpretations. They are various, and are constantly varying, and are without authority, as much as they are without uniformity and consistency. What the divine record says, we believe according to the best understanding we can form of its import. We believe that Jesus Christ "died for our sins;" that he "died, the just for the unjust;" that "he gave his life a ransom for many;" that "he is the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world:" that "we have redemption through his blood;" that we "have access to God, and enter into the holiest, that is, the nearest communion with God, by the blood of Jesus." We have no objection to the phrase "atoning blood," though it is not Scriptural, provided it is taken in a sense which the Scripture authorizes.

But what now is the meaning of all this phraseology, and of much more that is like it? Certainly it is, that there is some connexion between the sufferings of Christ, and our forgiveness, our redemption from sin and misery. This we all believe. But what *is* this connexion?—Here is all the difficulty; here is all the difference of opinion. We all believe, all Christians believe, that the death of Christ is a means of our salvation. But how is it a means? Was it—some one will say, perhaps, as if he were putting us to the test—was it an atonement, a sacrifice, a propitiation? We answer, that it was an atonement, a sacrifice, a propitiation. But now the question is, *what is* an atonement, a sacrifice, a propitiation? And this is the difficult question—a question, to the proper solution of which much thought, much cautious discrimination, much criticism, much knowledge, and especially of the ancient Hebrew sacrifices, is necessary. Can we not "receive the atonement," without this knowledge, this criticism, this deep philosophy? What then is to become of the mass of mankind, of the body of Christians? Can we not savingly "receive the atonement," unless we adopt some particular explanation, some peculiar creed, concerning it? Who will dare to answer this question in the negative, when he knows that the Christian world, the Orthodox Christian world, is filled with differences of opinion concerning it? The Presbyterian Church of America is, at this moment, rent asunder on this question. Christians, are, everywhere, divided on the questions, whether the redemption is particular or general, whether the sufferings of Christ were a literal endurance of the punishment due to sin, or only a moral equivalent, and whether this equivalency, supposing this to be the true explanation, consists in the endurance of God's displeasure against sin, or only in a simple scenic manifestation of it.

The atonement is one thing; the gracious interposition of Christ in our behalf; the doing of all that was necessary to be done, to provide the means and the way for our salvation—this is one thing; in this we all believe. The philosophy, the theory, the theology (so to speak) of the atonement, is another thing. About this, Orthodox Christians are differing with one another, about as much as they are differing from us. Nay, more, they are saying as hard things of one another as they ever said of us. Is it not time to learn wisdom? Is there not good reason for taking the ground we do—the ground, that is to say, of general

belief and trust, without insisting upon particular and peculiar explanations?

We believe in Christ—and well were it if we all believed in him too fervently and tenderly to be engaged much in theological disputes and denunciations. We believe in Christ. We pray to God through him. We ask God to bless us for his sake, for we feel that Christ makes intercession, and has obtained the privilege to be heard, through his own meritorious sufferings. Christ's sacrifice is the grandest, the most powerful means of salvation. It was a transcendent and most affecting example of meekness, patience, and forgiveness of injuries. It was a most striking exhibition of God's gracious interest and concern for us, of his view of the evil and curse of sin, and of his compassion for the guilty, and of his readiness to forgive the penitent. It was an atonement—that is to say, a means of reconciliation—reconciliation not of God to us, but of us to God. The blood of that sacrifice was atoning blood; that is, it was blood, on which whoever looks rightly, is touched with gratitude, and humility, and sorrow for his sins, and thus is reconciled to God by the death of his Son.

Now it is possible that we do not understand and receive all that is meant by the Scriptures on this subject. We admit it, as what imperfection ought always to admit; but we admit it, too, for the sake of saying, that, so long as we receive all that we can understand from the language in question; so long as we receive and believe every word that is written; no man has a right to say to us, without qualification, "You do not believe in the atonement." He may say, "You do not believe in the atonement according to my explanation, or according to Calvin's explanation;" but he has no right to say, without qualification, "You do not believe in that doctrine; you do not believe in the propitiation, in the reconciliation, in the sacrifice of Jesus;" no more right than we have to address the same language to him.*

* In an Introductory Essay to Butler's Analogy, published by a leading defender of what is called the New Divinity in the Presbyterian Church, the author says, "We maintain that the system of Unitarians, which denies all such substitution,"—meaning the removal of calamities from us, in ordinary life, by the interposition and suffering of another,—"is a violation of all the modes in which God has yet dispensed his blessings to man." We may just observe in passing, that the respectable author would not say, on reflection, "of *all* the modes;" for many of the most momentous blessings are dispensed to us through our own agency. But this is what he would say, that the Unitarian belief, with regard to the atonement, violates, as he conceives, one great principle of the divine beneficence. And that is the principle, that blessings are often conferred on us, in the course of Providence, through the instrumentality of others—of parents, friends, fellow-beings, &c. "It is by years of patient toil in others," says Mr. Barnes, in this Essay, "that we possess the elements of science, the principles of morals, the endowments of religion."—"Over a helpless babe,—ushered into the world, naked, feeble, speechless, there impends hunger, cold, sickness, sudden death,—a mother's watchfulness averts these evils. Over a nation impend revolutions, sword, famine, and the pestilence. The blood of the patriot averts these, and the nation smiles in peace." It is true that the author does "not affirm that this is *all* that is meant by an atonement," and herein we entirely agree with him. But he certainly is mistaken, when he says, that Unitarians deny all such substitution. We deny the Calvinistic explanation of atonement or substitution. We might reject the author's hypothesis too, if we knew what it was. But does it follow, that we deny all substitution? On the contrary, we especially hold to such substitution.

If all reputed belief in the atonement is to depend on receiving one particular

We believe then in the atonement. We believe in other views of this great subject, than those which are expressed by the word *atonement*. But this word spreads before our minds a truth of inexpressible interest. The reconciliation by Jesus Christ, his interposition to bring us nigh to God, is to us his grandest office. To our minds there is no sentence of the holy volume more interesting, more weighty, more precious, than that passage in the sublime Epistle to the Ephesians, "Ye were strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus, ye, who sometime were far off, are brought nigh by the blood of Christ." It is this which the world needed; it is this which every mind now needs, beyond all things—to be brought nigh to God. By error, by superstition and sin, by slavish fears and guilty passions, and wicked ways, we were separated from him. By a gracious mission from the Father, by simple and clear instructions, by encouraging representations of God's paternal love and pity, by winning examples of the transcendent beauty of goodness, and, most of all, by that grand consummation, DEATH, by that exhibition of the curse of sin, in which Jesus was made a curse for it, by that compassion of the Holy One, which flowed forth in every bleeding wound, by that voice for ever sounding through the world, "Father! Father! forgive them," Jesus has brought us nigh to God. Can it be thought enthusiasm to say, that there is no blessing, either in possession or in the range of possibility, to be compared with this? Does not reason itself declare, that all the harmonies of moral existence are broken, if the great, central, all-attracting Power, be not acknowledged and felt? Without God—to every mind that has awaked to the consciousness of its nature—without God, life is miserable; the world is dark; the universe is disrobed of its splendours; the intellectual tie to nature is broken; the charm of existence is dissolved; the great hope of being is

explanation of it, where is this to end? The party in the Presbyterian Church which strictly adheres to their standards, that is, to the genuine old Calvinistic theology, charges Mr. Barnes and his friends, and the body of New England Divines, with holding "another gospel." These again charge Dr. Taylor and the New Haven School with holding "another gospel." Meanwhile, each of these bodies very stoutly defends its position, insists upon its adherence to Christianity, and protests against the sentence of excision. Has either of these parties obtained a monopoly in protestation and profession? Are liberality, and candour to stop with each party, just where its convenience may dictate? Have they needed charity so much, that they have used it all up? Is the last chance of a candid and kind construction gone by? and is nobody ever to be permitted any more to say, "We believe in the Gospel, though not according to your explanation"?

There are, perhaps, no more accredited defenders of the popular doctrine of the atonement than Andrew Fuller and Bishop Magee. Fuller, as quoted by Evans in his "Sketch," says, "If we say, a way was opened by *the death of Christ*, for the free and consistent exercise of mercy in all the methods which sovereign wisdom saw fit to adopt, perhaps we shall include every material idea which the Scriptures give us of that important event."—*Evans*, p. 120, 14th Edition.

To the question, "In what way can the death of Christ be conceived to operate to the remission of sins?" Magee says, "The answer of the Christian is,—I know not, nor does it concern me to know, *in what manner* the sacrifice of Christ is connected with the forgiveness of sins; it is enough that this is declared by God to be the medium through which my salvation is effected."—*Magee on the Atonement*, p. 29, American Edition.

With these declarations we entirely agree.

lost; and the mind itself, like a star struck from its sphere, wanders through the infinite region of its conceptions, without attraction, tendency, destiny, or end. "Without God in the world!"—what a comprehensive and desolating sentence of exclusion is written in those few words! "Without God in the world!" It is to be without the presence of the Creator amidst his works, of the Father amidst his family, of the Being who has spread gladness and beauty all around us. It is to be without spiritual light, without any sure guidance or strong reliance, without any adequate object for our ever expanding love, without any sufficient consoler for our deepest sorrows, without any protector when the world joins against us, without any refuge when persecution pursues us to death, without any all-controlling principle, without the chief sanction of duty, without the great bond of existence. Oh! dark and fearful in spirit must we be, poor tremblers upon a bleak and desolate creation, deserted, despairing, miserable must we be, if the Power that controls the universe is not our friend, if God be nothing to us but a mighty and dread abstraction to which we never come near; if God be not "*our* God, and our exceeding great reward for ever!" This is the fearful doom that is reversed in the gospel of Christ. This is the fearful condition from which it was his great design to deliver us. For this end it was that he died, that he might bring us nigh to God. The blood of martyrdom is precious; but this was the blood of a holier sacrifice, of innocence pleading for guilt, "of a lamb without spot and without blemish, slain from the foundation of the world."

But we must pass to other topics, and the space that remains will oblige us to give them severally much less expansion in this brief statement.

III. In the third place, then, we say, that we believe in human depravity; and a very serious and saddening belief it is, too, that we hold on this point. We believe in the very great depravity of mankind, in the exceeding depravation of human nature. We believe that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." We believe all that is meant, when it is said of the world in the time of Noah, that "all the imaginations of men, and all the thoughts of their hearts, were evil, and only evil continually." We believe all that Paul meant, when he said, speaking of the general character of the heathen world in his time, "There is none that is righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God; they have all gone out of the way, there is none that doeth good, or is a doer of good, no, not one; with their tongues they use deceit, and the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; and the way of peace have they not known, and there is no fear of God before their eyes." We believe that this was not intended to be taken without qualifications, for Paul, as we shall soon have occasion to observe, made qualifications. It was true in the general. But it is not the ancient heathen world alone, that we regard as filled with evil. We believe that the world now, taken in the mass, is a very, a *very* bad world; that the sinfulness of the world is dreadful and horrible to consider; that the nations ought to be covered with sackcloth and mourning for it; that they are filled with misery by it. Why, can any man look abroad upon the countless miseries inflicted by selfishness, dishonesty, slander, strife, war; upon the boundless woes of intemperance, liber-

tinism, gambling, crime—can any man look upon all this, with the thousand minor diversities and shadings of guilt and guilty sorrow, and feel that he could write any less dreadful sentence against the world than Paul has written? Not believe in human depravity, great, general, dreadful depravity!—Why, a man must be a fool, nay, a stock or a stone, not to believe in it! He has no eyes, he has no senses, he has no perceptions, if he refuses to believe in it!

But let the reader of this exposition take with him these qualifications; for although it is popular, strangely popular, to speak extravagantly of human wickedness, we shall not endeavour to gain any man's good opinion by that means.

First, it is not the depravity of *nature* in which we believe. Human nature, nature as it exists in the bosom of an infant, is nothing else but capability; capability of good as well as evil, though more likely from its exposures, to be evil than good. It is not the depravity, then, but the depravation of nature, in which we believe.

Secondly, it is not in the unlimited application of Paul's language that we believe. When he said, "No, not one," he did not mean to say, without qualification, that there was not one good man in the world. He believed that there *were* good men. He did not mean to say, that there was not one good man in the *heathen* world; for he speaks in another place, of those, who, "not having the law, were a law to themselves, and by nature *did* those things which are written in the law." Paul meant, doubtless, to say, that the world is a very bad world, and in this we believe.

Neither, thirdly, do we believe in what is technically called "total depravity;" that is to say, a total and absolute destitution of everything right, even in bad men. No such critical accuracy do we believe that the Apostle ever affected, or ever thought of affecting. A very bad child may sometimes love his parents, and be melted into great tenderness towards them; and so a mind estranged from God, may sometimes tenderly feel his goodness.

Finally, we would not portray human wickedness without the deepest consideration and pity for it. Alas! how badly is man educated, how sadly is he deluded, how ignorant is he of himself, how little does he perceive the great love of God to him, which, if he were rightly taught to see it, might melt him into tenderness and penitence. Let us have some patience with human nature till it is less cruelly abused! Let us pity the sad and dark struggle that is passing in many hearts, between good and evil; and, though evil so often gains the ascendency, still let us pity, while we blame it; and while we speak to it in the solemn language of reprobation and warning, let us "tell these things," as Paul did, "even weeping."

IV. From this depraved condition, we believe in the fourth place, that men are to be recovered, by a process which is termed, in the Scriptures, regeneration. We believe in regeneration, or the new birth. That is to say, we believe, not in all the ideas which men have annexed to those words, but in what we understand the sacred writers to mean by them. We believe that, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" that "he must be new created in Christ Jesus;" that "old things must pass away, and all things become new." We certainly think that these phrases applied with peculiar

force to the condition of people, who were not only to be converted from their sins, but from the very forms of religion in which they had been brought up; and we know indeed that the phrase "new birth" did, according to the usage of language in those days, apply especially to the bare fact of proselytism. But we believe that men are still to be converted from their sins, and that this is a change of the most urgent necessity, and of the most unspeakable importance.

The application of this doctrine, too, is nearly universal. Some, like Samuel of old, may have grown up to piety from their earliest childhood, and it may be hoped that the number of such, through the means of more faithful education, is increasing. But we confess that we understand nothing of that romantic dream of the innocence of childhood. There are few children who do not need to be "converted," — from selfishness to disinterestedness, from the sullenness or violence of crossed passions to meekness and submission, from the dislike to the love of piety and pious exercises; from the habits of a sensual, to the efforts of a rational and spiritual nature. Childhood is, indeed, often pure, compared with what commonly follows, but still it needs a change. And that which does commonly follow, is a character which needs to be essentially changed, in order to prepare the soul for happiness in heaven.

Now there is usually a time in the life of every devoted Christian when this change commences. We say not a moment: for it is impossible so to date moral experiences. But there is a time, when the work is resolutely begun. Begun, we say; for it cannot, in any brief space, be completed. How soon it may be so far completed, as to entitle its subject to hope for future happiness, it is neither easy, nor material, to say. But to aver that it may be done in a moment, is a doctrine of which it is difficult to say whether it is, in our view, more unscriptural, extravagant, or dangerous.

With such qualifications and guards, authorized by the laws of sound criticism, we believe in regeneration; and we believe that the spirit of God is offered to aid, in this great work, the weakness of human endeavour.

V. We believe, too, in the fifth place, in the doctrine of election. That is to say, again, we believe in what the Scriptures, as we understand them, mean by that word.

The time has been, when, not the intrinsic importance of this doctrine, but the stress laid upon it, would have required that we should give it considerable space in this summary view. Our good old Armenian fathers fought with it for many a weary day. It was the great stumbling-block in the way of the last generation. And, during our time, it has been held, firmly and by many hands, in its place, as one of the essential foundations of faith. But within a few years past, it has come to be almost entirely overlooked; many preachers have almost ceased to direct attention to it; and many hearers are left to wonder what has become of it, and why it ever occupied a situation so conspicuous. Would that the history of it might be a lesson!

The truth is, that the doctrine of election is a matter either of scholastic subtilty or of presumptuous curiosity, with which, as we apprehend, we have but very little to do. Secret things belong to God. We believe in what the Bible teaches of God's infinite and eternal fore-

knowledge. We believe that, of all the events and actions, which take place in the universe of worlds, and the eternal succession of ages, there is not one, not the minutest, which God did not for ever foresee, with all the distinctness of immediate vision. It is a sublime truth. But it is a truth, which, the moment we undertake to analyze and apply, we are confounded in ignorance, and lost in wonder. We believe, but we would take care that we do not presumptuously believe. We believe in election, not in selection. We believe in foreknowledge, not in fate. We believe in the boundless wisdom of God, but not less in the weakness of our own comprehension. We believe that his thoughts are not as our thoughts, and that his ways are not as our ways, and his counsels are not as our counsels, and his decrees are not as our decrees. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so is he above the reach of our frail and finite understanding.

VI. In the sixth place, we believe in a future state of rewards and punishments. We believe that sin must ever produce misery, and that holiness must ever produce happiness. We believe that there is good for the good, and evil for the evil; and that these are to be dispensed exactly in proportion to the degree in which the good or evil qualities prevail.

The language of Scripture, and all the language of Scripture on this solemn subject, we have no hesitation about using, in the sense in which it was originally meant to be understood. But there has been that attempt to give definiteness to the indefinite language of the Bible on this subject, to measure the precise extent of those words which spread the vastness of the unknown futurity before us; and with this system of artificial criticism, the popular ignorance of Oriental figures and metaphors has so combined to fix a specific meaning on the phraseology in question, that it is difficult to use it without constant explanation. "Life everlasting," and "everlasting fire;" the mansions of rest, and the worm that never dieth; are phrases fraught with a just and reasonable, but, at the same time, vast and indefinite import. They are too obviously figurative to permit us to found definite and literal statements upon them. And it is especially true of those figures and phrases that are used to describe future misery, that there is not one which is not also used in the Bible to describe things earthly, limited, and temporary.

So confident in their opinions are men made by education and the current belief, that they can scarcely think it possible that the words of Scripture should have any other meaning than that which they assign to them. And they are ready, and actually feel as if they had a right, to ask those who differ from them to give up the Bible altogether. Nay, they go so far sometimes, as to aver, in the honesty and blindness of their prejudices, that their opponents have given up the Bible, and have given up all thoughts of trying the questions at issue by that standard. We have an equal right certainly to return the exhortation and to retort the charge. At any rate, we can accept neither. We believe in the Scriptures, as heartily as any others, and, as we think, more justly. We believe in all that they teach on this subject, and in all they teach on any subject.

We believe, then, in a heaven and a hell. We believe that there is more to be feared hereafter than any man ever feared, and more to be hoped than any man ever hoped. We believe that heaven is more

glorious, and that hell is more dreadful, than any man ever conceived. We believe that the consequences both in this world and another,—that the consequences to every man, of any evil habits he forms, whether of feeling or action, run far beyond his most fearful anticipations. Are mankind yet so gross in their conceptions, that outward images convey the most transporting ideas they have of happiness, and the most tremendous ideas they have of misery? Is a celestial city all that they understand by heaven? Let them know that there is a heaven of the mind, a heaven of tried and confirmed virtue, a heaven of holy contemplation, so rapturous, that all ideas of place are transcended, are almost forgotten in its ecstasy. Is a world of elemental fires and bodily torments, all that they understand by hell? Let them consider, that a hell of the mind, the hell of an inwardly gnawing and burning conscience, the hell of remorse and mental agony, may be more horrible than fire, and brimstone, and the blackness of darkness for ever! Yes, the crushing mountains, the folding darkness, the consuming fire might be welcomed, if they could bury, or hide, or scar the guilty and agonized passions, which, while they live, must for ever and for ever burn, and blacken, and blast the soul,—which, while they live, must for ever and for ever crush it down to untold and unutterable misery.

VII. Once more, and finally; we believe in the supreme and all-absorbing importance of religion.

There is nothing more astonishing to us, than the freedom of language which we sometimes hear used, on this subject; the bold and confident tone with which it is said that there is no religion among us, nothing but flimsy and fine sentiment, passing under the name of religion. We are ready to ask, what *is* religion in the hearts of men, what are its sources and fountains, when they can so easily deny it to the hearts of others? We are inclined to use no severity of retort, on this affecting theme; else the observation of life might furnish us with some trying questions for the uncharitable to consider. But we will only express the simple astonishment we feel at such treatment. We will only say again, and say it more in wonder than in anger—what must religion be in others, what can be its kindness, and tenderness, and peace, and preciousness, when they are so ready to rise up from its blessed affections, to the denial of its existence in the hearts of their brethren?

We repeat, then, that we believe in the supreme and all-absorbing importance of religion. "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" is to us the most undeniable of all arguments; "What shall I do to be saved?" the most reasonable and momentous of all questions; "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" the most affecting of all prayers. The soul's concern is the great concern. The interests of experimental, vital, practical religion are the great interests of our being. No language can be too strong,—no language can be strong enough, to give them due expression. No anxiety is too deep, no care too heedful, no effort too earnest, no prayer too importunate, to be bestowed upon this almost infinite concern of the soul's purification, piety, virtue, and welfare. No labour of life should be undertaken, no journey pursued, no business transacted, no pleasure enjoyed, no activity employed, no rest indulged in, without ultimate reference to that great end of our being. Without it, life has no sufficient object, and death has no hope, and eternity no promise.

What more shall we say? Look at it,—look at this inward being, and say—what is it? Formed by the Almighty hand, and therefore formed for some purpose; built up in its proportions, fashioned in every part, by infinite skill; an emanation, breathed from the spirit of God,—say, what is it? Its nature, its necessity, its design, its destiny,—what is it? So formed it is, so builded, so fashioned, so exactly balanced, and so exquisitely touched in every part, that sin introduced into it, is the direst misery; that every unholy thought falls upon it as a drop of poison; that every guilty desire, breathing upon every delicate part and fibre of the soul, is the plague-spot of evil, the blight of death. Made, then, is it for virtue, not for sin,—oh! not for sin, for that is death; but made for virtue, for purity, as its end, its rest, its bliss; made thus by God Almighty.

Thou canst not alter it. Go, and bid the mountain walls sink down to the level of the valleys; go and stand upon the sea shore and turn back its swelling waves; or stretch forth thy hand, and hold the stars in their courses; but not more vain shall be thy power to change them, than it is to change one of the laws of thy nature. *Then thou must be virtuous.* As true it is, as if the whole universe spoke in one voice, *thou must be virtuous.* If thou art a sinner, thou "must be born again." If thou art tempted, thou must resist. If thou hast guilty passions, thou must deny them. If thou art a bad man, thou must be a good man.

There is the law. It is not our law; it is not our voice that speaks. It is the law of God Almighty; it is the voice of God that speaks,—speaks through every nerve and fibre, through every power and element of that moral constitution which he has given. It is the voice, not of an arbitrary will, nor of some stern and impracticable law, that is now abrogated. For the *grace* of God, that hath appeared to all men, teaches, that, denying all ungodliness and every worldly lust, they must live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present evil world. So let us live; and then this life, with all its momentous scenes, its moving experiences, and its precious interests, shall be but the beginning of the wonders, and glories, and joys of our existence. So let us live; and let us think this, that to live thus, is the great, urgent, instant, unutterable, all-absorbing concern of our life and of our being.

ON THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF;

WITH INFERENCES CONCERNING DOUBT, DECISION, CONFIDENCE, AND THE TRIAL OF FAITH.

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1 Cor. xiii. 12: "Now I know in part."

It is of some importance—I think it is of no little importance—that we should entertain just ideas of the nature of religious belief. To this subject, therefore, and especially with a view to consider some difficulties and to meet some practical questions, I wish, at present, to invite your attention.

In the first place, then, it may be observed in general, that religious belief is essentially of the same nature as moral belief. In form, they differ, but in substance, they are the same. The common distinction between Religion and Morals, as totally different things, is as erroneous in principle as it is injurious in its effects. Both have their root in the same great original sense of rectitude, which God has impressed on our nature; and without which we should not be men. By religion, we mean our duty to God; and by morals, our duty to men: and both are bound upon us by the same essential reason—that they are right. Or they are respectively, the love of God and the love of men; and both, in their highest character, are a love of the same goodness. Piety and philanthropy are essentially of the same nature. The Bible appeals to both alike, and it does not sever, but it binds them together; summing up all its commandments in these two—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself:" and saying emphatically, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how doth he love God whom he hath not seen!"

Further; as the original grounds of conviction, so the steps by which we arrive at our conclusions in both of these spheres of duty, are essentially the same. The steps are steps of reasoning. The Bible teaches morals and religion alike, and teaches them in the same way; and we arrive at its meaning in both, by the same means—viz. by that process of reasoning, called criticism. There is not one kind of criticism to be applied to those texts which teach the love of God, and another to those which teach the love of man; there is the same process of reasoning in both cases. And so in Natural Theology and Moral Philosophy, alike, we begin with certain original truths in the mind, and proceed to deduce certain duties; and in both cases, the process of reasoning is, in kind, the same.

But now the material question, and that to which I have been endeavouring to bring you, is this: *what* kind of reasoning is it? And the answer is plain; it is that kind of reasoning which is usually called moral reasoning. It is commonly defined, simply by being distinguished

from mathematical reasoning. That is to say, it is not like a mathematical deduction, infallible; it is not attended with a feeling of certainty, but only of belief.

But still we must distinguish; for is is important to observe that the difference of which we speak relates only to *deductions*—not at all to *principles*. The original *principles* of religion and morals are certain. They are as certain as any other principles; as certain as the principles on which mathematical science is founded. They are not matters of belief at all, but matters of absolute knowledge. Though not in religious belief, accurately speaking, yet in religion, there are absolute certainties. I am as sure that I have a conscience and a religious nature, I am as sure again, that benevolence and other moral qualities are right, and I am as sure that my nature is constituted to approve and love them, wherever they appear—in man or in God—as I am of my own existence and identity, or as I am that my nature is constituted to assent to the truth of any mathematical axioms. It is important to say this, because the distinction commonly made between mathematical and moral reasonings, may be carelessly extended, so as to cover more ground than belongs to it. For the basis of the mathematics is not more certain and irrefragable, than the basis of morals.

But the moment we take one step from that basis, from those first principles, and enter upon deductions, it is agreed by all reasoners, that a marked and essential difference obtains. In the mathematics, every step of the deduction is as certain as the principle from which it started. In moral reasonings, it is not so. The ideas, involved in these reasonings, are not so definite, the terms not so clear, and the result is, by no means, so unerring. The steps of moral deduction, of philological criticism, are not steps of demonstration. But these are the steps that lead to religious belief—that conduct to a creed. A creed is not a certainty, but a belief. Put any certainty into a creed, and the absurdity would at once be felt. No one could gravely stand up and say, "I believe in my own existence; I believe in my identity; I believe that I ought to be a good man." These are matters of certainty; but the propositions of a creed are matters of logical inference. The seal upon it is not absolute consciousness, but religious conviction. The scale on which that conviction is marked, is the scale of probability. I use this term, probability, I ought to say, in the technical sense which moral reasoners assign to it, which is stronger, and more definite than the popular sense. I use it as simply opposed to certainty. On the scale of probability, or of moral reasoning, in other words, belief often rises, no doubt, almost to certainty. But it never, strictly speaking, arrives at that point. It is never absolute certainty; it is never perfect knowledge. For "we know in part," says the Apostle.

From these views, I am not aware that any intelligent, moral, or religious reasoners dissent. The distinction is familiar in all the standard writers, and may be considered as the settled judgment of all who are competent to form an opinion on the subject. Moral evidence is not demonstration. Belief is not knowledge. Believing a thing to be true, is not knowing it to be true.

Not to dwell longer, then, upon a point so plain, and so universally conceded, my further purpose is to offer some remarks upon this admitted nature of religious belief.

I. My first remark is, if the view presented be just, that it is common to assign, in some respects, a very injurious and unwarrantable importance to doubts.

Doubts enter into the very processes by which we arrive at belief. Nay, they enter into the very nature of belief itself. They constitute a part of it, by very definition. Believing is doubting, to a certain extent. Believing and doubting are correlative terms. They are co-essential elements. "We know in part." That is to say, our knowledge is imperfect. But imperfect knowledge implies uncertainty. And uncertainty is doubt.

But the prevalent feeling and policy of the Christian world has been, to beat down and destroy doubts. It has given them no quarter. It has allowed them no place in the theory of its creeds, though those creeds have begun with the phrase "I believe"—not "I know," but "I believe." And this tendency of the public opinion and practice of the churches has had the effect, I wish it may be considered, to give not only an unwarrantable, but a most injurious importance to doubts. Its effect has been, not only to rend the bosom of the church, to cast out many honest and virtuous men from it, to make a new sect for every new doubt, but, I fear, to make many, who might have been preserved from that result, infidels. Doubt, I say, has derived a factitious importance from this universal persecution. That portion of evidence, which leads a man to doubt, has been held by him to deserve more attention than that which leads him to believe. One fraction of doubt has weighed with him more than nine parts of evidence in favour of Christianity, and he has become an unbeliever, we may say, against his own convictions. It is an independent and honest mind, too,—which makes the case a more unfortunate one—that is especially liable to be carried away by this fallacy. Such an one, afraid of everything implicit and traditional in faith, says, "I have a doubt; I must be fair and impartial; I must be true to my convictions; I must assent to nothing from fear or favour: "*I have a doubt*," this man says, "and how can I say I believe, so long as I doubt?" But why, let me ask in turn, should he pay this sort of homage to a mere negative conviction? What is there in a doubt—that is to say, what is there in a reason *against*, that is to be treated with so much more consideration, than in a reason *for?* Why should not this man say, though he may *not* feel that the argument is perfectly satisfactory, though he *may* be troubled with doubts,—why should he not say, "I have twice as much evidence for the Bible and a future life, as I have against them, and how can I *doubt* so long as I have that evidence?" I am sure this conclusion would be twice as rational as the other; and I am certain that the spirit of this conclusion would have saved many from unbelief. But we do not ask so much as we have asked, in form, and by way of rejoinder. We do not ask—we have no right, as advocates or apologists for Christianity, to ask the man who hesitates, to say that he has *no* doubts; but we do ask, and have, in reason, a right to ask, that he should yield his mind, not to any assumed power or importance of doubt, but to the preponderance of evidence.

Beside the doubt about Christianity, there is another which may be considered as a part of it, but which, I think, demands a distinct notice; and that is, the doubt about a future life. This is a doubt

which is much more frequently felt, than expressed. You will always observe when it is expressed, that it is done with great reluctance and caution, with a feeling almost as if a crime were confessed; and with a feeling, too, as if the matter of the confession were quite as peculiar to the individual confessing, as it is painful to him.

Now the difficulty here arises from our not sufficiently considering the nature of moral evidence — the nature of religious belief. It would relieve us, to be at once more frank and rational, instead of wrapping up the matter like a dark secret, in the cloud of our speculative misapprehensions. The truth is, that, in doubt on this point, there *is* nothing very strange. It belongs to more minds than you may imagine. It must belong, more or less, to all minds. It enters into the very nature of our belief in a future state. For that belief is not certainty. The point in question is not the subject of intuition. No man ever saw the world of departed spirits. All the views and convictions that any man has, or can have about it, fall short of actual knowledge. We believe, indeed, in the divine mission of Christ. We believe, too, in the mercy of God, and should entertain some hope of a future life, even on the general ground of natural Theology. We see not, moreover, how the scene of this life can be cleared up, how the great plan of things can be made consistent or tolerable, without a future scene. And on all these accounts, we have a strong faith in futurity. But to say that this faith has passed beyond every shadow of doubt, is to say more than is true — more than can be reasonably demanded of faith.

Now this shadow, sometimes passing over the mind — why should it chill, or darken, or distress any one, as if it were something portentous, or, in fact, anything extraordinary? Certainty, it is true, would be grateful. Uncertainty is painful; though it is also, I think, and will yet attempt to show, useful. It is painful, however, I confess, in proportion as it is great. But this is what I say — it is not at all surprising. It is a part of our dispensation. Some clouds are between us and those ever bright regions, in whose existence we fully believe. So God has willed it to be. We see through a glass darkly. We walk by faith, and not by sight. We long for a sight of those regions of existence in which we are to live; but it has not pleased God to give us that vision.

And the point that I would urge is, that we should not give any undue importance to this lack of vision, or of certainty. We should do most unwisely and unnecessarily, to magnify the importance of this doubt, by considering it as anything peculiar, or awful, or criminal. It is painful, indeed, but not wonderful. It is painful; but the pain, like all the pains of our moral imperfection, is an element of improvement, and it is to be removed by reflection, by prayer, by self-purification. To the mind rightly thinking and feeling, the evidence of immortality is growing continually stronger and stronger. Already, with some, it touches upon the borders of certainty. So may it do with every one who hears me. And the direction to be given for every one's guidance is, not to stumble at doubt, but to press on to certainty. And I hold, and firmly believe, that an assurance, all but vision, is just as certainly at the end of the process, with every right mind, as complete demonstration is at the end of every true theorem in science.

This undue importance attached to doubts becomes a still more

serious matter, when it affects, not only a man's opinions, but his practice. Do not many neglect to lead a strictly virtuous and religious life, on this plea of uncertainty about the result? Is it not, at least, the plea which the heart secretly offers, to justify its indolence or indifference? A man says with himself, "I do not know what *is* the right way, there are so many disputes about it;" and he thinks that an apology for his neglect of the whole subject. Or he says, perhaps, "I do not *know* that the Bible is true; I do not *know* that there is any future life, or that there is any retribution hereafter. If I *did know* it, I should act upon my knowledge; but the fact is, there is no certainty about these matters, and therefore I shall give myself no trouble about them." Now, to justify this conclusion, he should be able to say, "I know that the Bible is *not* true, and that there *is* no future life, and no retribution hereafter." If he *could* say this, then his premises would be as broad as his conclusion. But to say, "I do not know," and therefore to do nothing, is as if a man should say, "I do not know that I shall have a crop, and therefore I will sow no seed;" or, "I do not know that I shall gain property, and therefore I will do no business;" or, "I do not know that I shall obtain happiness, and therefore I will not seek it." The truth is, that, in the affairs of this life, men act upon the strongest evidence, upon the strongest probability; it is a part of the very wisdom of their condition, that they should so act; and so they ought to act, so it is wise that they should be left to act in the affairs of religion. If any one refuses to act upon such a ground, he refuses the discipline of his own nature, and of God's providence; and neither his own nature, nor the providence of heaven, will hold him guiltless.

II. Nay more, as a religious being, he must act upon some ground, and he ought to choose the most reasonable ground; and this is the substance of the second remark I have to offer on the nature of religious belief.

It is not often enough considered, perhaps, that every man, every thinking man, at least, must have some theory, must choose between opposing arguments; must come to some conclusion, which he is to take and defend, with all its difficulties. He who doubts, is apt to regard himself as occupying vantage ground in religious discussion; as occupying a position above the believer, and entitled to look down upon him without sympathy, and even with scorn; as if he, the infidel, stood aloof from the difficulties that press upon questions of this nature. But this is an entire mistake. He, too, the infidel, is in the battle, and there is no discharge in that war. I have said that believing is doubting to a certain extent. I now say, that doubting is believing to a certain extent. The doubter holds a theory. That extreme of doubt, denominated Pyrrhonism, is still a theory. It is believing something; and something very prodigious, too—even that *nothing* is to be believed! Doubting, I say, is believing, to a certain extent. A man may say he is certain of nothing. But he is certain, I suppose, of his uncertainty; certain that he is a doubter; certain then that he is a thinker—certain that he is a conscious being. But still he may say—willing to doubt all he can—that with regard to the *objects* of his consciousness, he can have no certainty. He is conscious of the difference between truth and error, right and wrong; but he is not certain, he says, that these per-

ceptions of his agree with the absolute and eternal truth of things. The amount of it is this: he knows some things, and he does not know others; he knows the finite, but not the infinite—knows the relative, but not the absolute; and he is not certain that what he knows, agrees with what he does not know. I answer, neither is it his business to know this. He does not know that his *existence* is compatible with God's *existence;* compatibility or incompatibility in the case he knows nothing about; but he knows that *he exists;* that he admits. And I say, just as surely does he know the difference between right and wrong. He cannot go behind this consciousness, into a region of doubt, any more than he can go behind the consciousness of his existence. Like a flash of lightning—like the voice of thunder, is this revelation of conscience from the thickest cloud of his doubts; it is as clear, and strong, and irresistible.

But suppose that we have brought the doubter thus far to the recognition of the great primitive facts of philosophy and religion: yet when we come to the deductions from these facts—to a system of faith—we have admitted that there is some uncertainty. How shall our reasoner proceed here? Shall he say, that, because there is uncertainty, he will believe nothing? That would be refusing to do the only thing and the very thing, which the circumstances require of him—even to choose between opposing arguments. It would be as if the mariner should say, "the waters are unstable beneath me; they sway me this way and that way; and I will lay no course across the deep." No; the only question is—what is it best to *do?* What is the wisest course to take? What is it most reasonable to believe in? The moral inquirer is on the ocean; and to give himself up to doubt, indifference, and inaction, is to perish there. And the question is between remaining in this state, and adopting some religious faith for guidance and support.

Now it appears to me, that the coldest and feeblest statement of the argument for religious faith gathers strength and warmth, from being placed in this point of light. For thus would a man reason on this ground. "To doubt everything—to doubt all the primitive facts of my moral consciousness, I have admitted, is self-contradicting absurdity. But to reject all religious systems flowing from them, because they are not equally certain, is as false in philosophy, as to reject the original facts. Something, I *must believe*—something better or something worse. Some conclusions flow out of the principles, and I cannot help it. To reject all conclusion is irrational and impossible folly. Nay, more, I am bound to accept those conclusions that favour the improvement of my nature. That I am made to improve is as certain as that I am made to be. Now to reject *all religious faith*, is ruin to my spiritual nature. To deny, for instance, the doctrine of immortality, comes to the same thing; my soul dies now, if it is not to live for ever. To reject Christianity is to reject what is obviously the most powerful means of improvement in the world. At any rate, if there be no truth at all in religion, if its grandest principles are falsehoods, and its grandest revelations are dreams, then the very spring of improvement in me is broken, and my situation involves this astounding absurdity—that I am made to improve, to be happy in nothing else, and yet that this is the very thing for which no provision is made; that an appetite is given me, which craves divine and immortal

good; that on its being supplied depends the essential life of my mind and heart; and yet, that beneath the heavens, there is no food for it: no, nor above the heavens—that the only provision made for it is poison and death!"

Can this be?—as it must be if the sceptic's theory be true. Can it be that a light is on my path, which leads me to the loftiest and most blessed virtue and happiness—such is the light of Religion—and yet that it sprung from the dark suggestions of fraud and imposture? Can it be that God has formed our minds to feel the most inexpressible longings after a life, beyond the barriers of time; and yet, that he has left our hearts to break with the dreadful conviction that the blessed land is not for us? Is this the obvious reasonableness of the sceptic's choice? Is this the charm of doubt, that is to outweigh the whole mass of evidence? Why such useless and cruel contradictions and incongruities, as enter into the unbeliever's plan? Why are we sent to wander through this world, in sorrow and despair, as we must do, if there is no guiding light and no inviting prospect?

It would be easy, if there were space in this discussion, to present in many lights, the glaring contradictions to which scepticism must lead, and which surely are harder to receive than any tolerably rational system of faith. Suppose that such system were not free from serious difficulties. I think it is; but suppose that it were not. Yet if the weight of evidence be in its favour—and if we must embrace some system; and that of faith clears up more difficulties than the opposite system; is it not most reasonable that our minds should settle down into a calm and confiding belief? Let every man, with these views, make his election. Let him choose, for these are the questions, whether he will take for his portion, light or darkness, cheerfulness or sadness, hope or despair, the warmth of confiding piety, or the cold and cheerless atmosphere of distrust, the spirit of sacred improvement, or the spirit of worldly negligence and apathy. I do not wish, in making this contrast, to speak with any harshness of scepticism. I state it as it appears to myself, and as it would appear, let me embrace whichever theory I might. Faith is light, and cheerfulness, and hope, and devotion, and improvement. And doubt, on essential points, is in its very nature darkness, and sadness, and despondency, and distrust, and spiritual death.

For which, think you—for I cannot help pressing the alternative, a moment longer—for which was our nature made? To be lifted up and strengthened, to be bright and happy, or to be cast down and crushed—to be the victim of doubt—to be plunged into the dungeon of despair? Suppose a man should literally shut himself up in a dungeon; should sit down in darkness, and surround himself with none but dismal objects; should resign his powers to inaction, and give up all the glorious prospects and enjoyments of the wide and boundless universe; and then should say, that this was the portion designed for him by the Author of nature. What should we say to him? We should say, and surely we should take strong ground, "Your Maker has given you limbs, and senses; he has given you active powers, and capacities for improvement, and he designed that you should use them: he made you not to dwell in a prison, not to dwell in dungeon glooms, but he made you for light, and action, and freedom, and improvement, and happiness. Your

senses, your very faculties, both of body and mind, will perish and die, in this situation; go forth, then, into the open and fair domain of nature and life." And this we may say, with equal force, to him who is pausing on the threshold of the dreary prison-house of scepticism. God made us not to know—not to know everything, for then must he have made us equal to himself—but to believe, to confide, to trust. And he who refuses to receive what is reasonable, because it is not certain, refuses obedience to that very law, under which he is created and must live.

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1 Cor. xiii. 12: "Now I know in part."

From these words, I resume the subject of my morning discourse. The subject was the nature of religious belief, though it was my leading object to present some *inferences* from the admitted principles of this kind of belief. With regard to the nature of faith, however, I stated what is admitted on all hands, that it is not certainty; that believing is not knowing; that this kind of conviction is entirely to be distinguished from intuition and from the results of scientific demonstration. But in this account of faith, I said that its original principles are not to be confounded. They are certain. They are not matters of faith, but of knowledge. I do not believe that I exist; I know it. I do not *believe* in the difference between right and wrong; I *know* it. I do not *believe* that benevolence or the promotion of others' happiness is right; I *know* it. In all these cases, I assert a self-evident proposition; a truism, in fact. I am but saying in effect, that right is right, and wrong is wrong. But the moment I depart from these primary moral distinctions and first truths of religion, and take one step of deduction, that is a step of faith. Absolute certainty then forsakes me, and I stand upon the ground of faith. My deductions then, are not mathematical, but moral; they are not certain, but they take their place on the scale of logical probability. That is to say, they are accompanied with something more or less of doubt! and religious doubting, therefore, ought not to be made the monster that it has been, in the Christian world. It is giving an unwarrantable importance to doubt, thus to treat it. And this was the matter of my first inference. My next observation was, that every thinking man must have a system, and is bound to adopt that which is most reasonable; that the sceptic has a system as truly as the believer; and that in the balance of probabilities, the sceptic has adopted a system, which not only has its difficulties, like every other, but which has this special and insuperable difficulty—that it is fatal to the clearest principles and dearest hopes of human improvement.

III. In connexion with what I have said about the nature of faith, let me now observe, in the third place, that those who profess to *know that they are right*, who profess this not only in regard to the great points of conscience and of consciousness, but also in regard to the peculiarities of their creed, have as little to support them, in a just view of the subject, as those who give an undue importance to their doubts; or as those who choose a system of doubt (by definition, the weaker system), in preference to a system of faith.

I have heard men say, when comparing themselves with their reli-

gious opponents, and I have remarked that it was said with great self-complacency, "The difference between us and others is, that they think indeed that they are right, but we know that we are right. *They* are confident that they hold the truth, but *we* are certain"—not confident, oh! by no means confident! "we are certain that we hold the truth." Now for any men to say this, is so very little to the credit of their discrimination, that it cannot be *much* to the credit of their correctness. It shows that so far from being entitled to presume that they have the right faith, that they do not know what any faith is—that they do not know what faith is, in the most generic sense—that they do not understand the definition of the term. Faith is not knowledge. Believing that we are right is not, in any tolerable use of the English language, knowing that we are right. For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? What he knoweth, why doth he speak of as a matter of faith? Demonstration is one thing; a creed is another, and an entirely different thing. It is so, by definition.

I do not object to a firm persuasion in any mind, that it is right, provided the point be one on which it is competent to decide. I do not object, *now*, to the use of the phrase (as a phrase of great emphasis and energy), "I know, or I feel, or I am sure," that a certain doctrine is true. But when any persons profess to use this expression of confidence literally and accurately, when they hold this their assurance, as a specific and triumphant distinction; when they claim to be superior to others on such ground, and would attempt to overawe and abash modest and thoughtful men, by such arrogant and irrational pretensions to infallibility, I think it a proper occasion for applying the language of the apostolic rebuke, and telling them that they "know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm." They quite mistake the subject and subject-matter of which they are speaking: and I have only to remind them that it is *believing* that they were talking about, not *knowing*.

The principle must be a very poor one too, that works so poorly in practice; that destroys itself, indeed, the moment it is brought to its application. If different classes of Christians will say, modestly, and no matter how solemnly, that they believe that they are right; and yet will concede so much to human frailty as to admit, that they may be wrong in some measure: then, their respective claims do not destroy each other entirely, nor destroy the common faith. But if every class will have it that it *knows* itself to be right, and knows everything differing from it to be wrong; what a picture of presumptuous, distracted, and self-destroying churches is presented to us! Here is the Calvinist, that knows *he* is right; and the Arminian knows *he* is right; and the Universalist knows *he* is right; and the Swedenborgian has *his* full measure of the same comfortable knowledge; and the Presbyterian and Episcopalian, and the Methodist and Baptist, are each and all possessed of the same undoubting assurance. Are all right, then, in the points on which they differ? No; that is impossible. To what, then, does this vaunted distinction of *knowing*, amount? To nothing at all. That cannot be a distinction which appertains to all classes—to individuals, that is to say, of all classes. To what, then, does the knowing itself amount? I answer once more, to nothing at all. For it is clear, that all this knowing cannot be knowledge. It may be confidence, and presumption, and positive assertion, but it is not knowledge.

But a man may say, "It is a matter of experience, and therefore I know it." *What*, let me ask, is a matter of experience? Not that any theological system is true, not that any doctrine is revealed, not that any one mode of church order is divinely ordained. These are matters of inference, not of experience. "Nay, but my meaning," says the confident votary, "is, that my faith, or my mode of worship has had such an effect upon me; it has so delightfully wrought itself into my experience, that I am sure it must be the true doctrine, the true way. Heaven has thus sealed it to me in absolute certainty." If only one class could say this, it might amount to something like presumptive proof. But the truth is, that every form of faith and discipline can present just such instances. It is particularly true, that recent conversion to a religious system is apt to produce this kind of vivid experience. There is not a faith in Christendom, Catholic or Protestant, strict or liberal, but has converts ready to proclaim its efficiency. The argument proves too much, legitimately to prove anything.

This arrogance, too, is as unseemly as it is baseless. If the subject did not forbid it, yet the sense of imperfection ought to restrain a frail, fallible, erring human being from such presumption—presumption, too, which is commonly strong, in proportion as the doctrine is dark and doubtful, and the mind is readier to decide than to examine. Such indeed, was not the spirit of Newton, "child-like sage." Such was not the spirit of Socrates, who, against the all-knowing sophists of his day, was accustomed to say that he professed to know nothing—that he was only a seeker after knowledge. Such, in fine, has never been the spirit of deep study and patient thought. But assurance rises up to speak where modesty is silent; and a rash judgment, to pronounce, where patient inquiry hesitates; and ignorance, to say, "I know," where real knowledge can only say, "I believe."

Such was not the spirit of the author of the "Saints' Rest," nor of the good old English time. "I am not so foolish," says Baxter, "as to pretend my certainty to be greater than it is, merely because it is a dishonour to be less certain. My certainty that I am a man, is before my certainty that there is a God. My certainty that there is a God, is before my certainty that he requireth love and holiness of his creatures. My certainty of this is greater than my certainty of the life of rewards and punishments hereafter. My certainty of that is greater than my certainty of the endless duration of it, and the immortality of individual souls. My certainty of the Deity is greater than my certainty of the Christian faith. My certainty of the Christian faith, in its essentials, is greater than my certainty of the perfection and infallibility of the Holy Scriptures. And my certainty of that, is greater than my certainty of many particular texts, and so of the truth of many particular doctrines, and of the canonicalness of some certain books."

Let me add a word of caution, however, if it can be necessary, in closing this part of my discourse. Because I maintain that absolute certainty does not properly attach to matters of faith, let it not by any means be regarded as a fair inference, that the great points of our Christian faith are to be held as if they were doubtful matters. A believer is, by definition one whom belief, and not doubt, characterizes. And the Christian belief, I hold to be founded on such evidence, as to

be put "beyond all reasonable doubt." This phrase—"beyond reasonable doubt"—is held, in the law, to describe the nearest approach to certainty that is compatible with the nature of moral evidence—to describe such a degree of confidence as lays a just foundation for decision and action. Such I hold to be the nature and strength of the Christian faith.

I have thus attempted to show that uncertainty or doubt, greater or less in degree, is a part of our dispensation, implied in that declaration of the Apostle, that we know only in part; that it is implied in the very nature of moral evidence; implied in faith; and therefore that it is not to be regarded as monstrous, nor to be magnified into undue importance, nor to be made a reason for rejecting the system of faith; unless, in the second place, it can lay claim to a strength and consistency, and an escape from difficulties, which will give it manifest superiority over the system of faith—a superiority which, on great points, is denied to it by its utter insufficiency to improve, exalt, strengthen, and bless human nature; and, finally, I have insisted, that, on the other hand no rational system of faith, when it goes beyond the principles of absolute conscience and consciousness, can pretend to be freed from doubt—can pretend to absolute certainty; and hence, that the confident assurance of the fanatic is, in this matter, as much out of place, as the overweening self-complacency of the sceptic.

IV. But after all, this, to some, may be a very unsatisfactory view of the subject. They may even think it injurious and unsafe. I must not leave the subject, therefore, without attempting, in the last place, to show the *utility* of that moral system and mental discipline, under which, as I contend, we are placed. That we are placed under it is, indeed, in my view, a sufficient answer to all objections. But it may still be asked, why is it so? Why is there one shadow or shade left on our path? Why, instead of showing brighter and brighter, can it not be, from the beginning, one track of brightness? Why are we not made just as sure of every moral truth, that is interesting and important to us, as we are that we behold the light of the Sun? Why, in fine, is not moral evidence, like mathematical demonstration, put beyond every possibility of doubt?

It might, indeed, be answered that the very nature of the subjects, and of the mind, makes the difference. And I believe that this is true. At any rate, it is inconceivable to us that moral deductions should, by any possibility, have been made as definite and certain as those of the most exact science. But I am not obliged to rest the answer on this apparent necessity of the case alone; and I proceed to offer, in further defence of that moral constitution of things under which our minds are trained up, the consideration of utility.

I say, then, that it is a useful system—a good system—the best system by us conceivable. If I am asked why we have not vision, instead of promise, to guide us; why we have not assurance, instead of trust; why not knowledge, instead of faith; I answer, because it is not expedient for us. Probably we could not bear vision, or it would be too much for our contentment or our attention to the objects around us; but I do not rest on a probability. I appeal to what is certain also; and that is, that assurance and knowledge would lessen the trial of virtue and of the intellect; and therefore would hinder their improvement.

To give an illustration of my meaning, and especially to show why it may not be expedient that we should have an actual vision of a future life—it is not best that children, for instance, should be introduced to an actual knowledge or experience of the circumstances, allurements, or interests of maturer life. That view of the future might too much dazzle or engross them, might distract them from the proper business of their education, and might, in many ways, bring a trial upon their young spirits, beyond their power to bear. Therefore, they look through a veil upon the full strength of human passions and interests. Human love and hate, and hope and fear, human ambition and covetousness, and splendour and beauty, they see through a glass darkly. Just as little might we be able in this childhood of our being, to have the realities of a future scene laid open to us.

Again, for an illustration of the general advantages of inquiry instead of certainty: if a man were to travel around the globe, it might be far more agreeable and easy to him, to have a broad and beaten pathway, to have marked and regular stages, to be borne onward in a chariot under an experienced and safe conduct, and to have deputations from the nations he passed through, to wait upon him, and to inform him exactly of everything he wished to know. But would such a grand progress be as favourable to his character, to his mental cultivation or moral discipline, to his enterprise, and good sense, and hardihood, and energy, as it would be to thread out his way for himself; to overcome obstacles and extricate himself from difficulties; to take, in other words, the general chart of his travels, and to gain an acquaintance with men and things, by inquiry and observation, and reasoning, and experience? Such is the course ordained for the moral traveller in passing through this world. And certainly it is better for him; better that he should draw conclusions, though he make mistakes; better that he should reason upon probabilities, though he sometimes err; better that he should gain wisdom from experience, though the way be rough and sometimes overshadowed with uncertainty, than that he should always move on, upon the level, and easy, and sure path of knowledge.

Apply the same question to the ordinary course of life. A youth might always have a tutor, or a mentor to direct him. And then he would always be in the condition of one who knew what to do, of one who had no doubt. Yes, and *he would always be a child.* Can any one doubt that it would be more conducive to his improvement, to his courage and resolution, to his wisdom and worth, that he should be obliged to reason, to employ his powers, to be tried with conflicting views of subjects, to find out his own way, to grow wise by his own experience, and to have light break in upon his path as he needs it, or as he seeks it? But such is the actual course of life; and similar to this, is the course which the mind must take in the religious life.

Nor is this all. It appears to me that there is one further, more specific, and more important use of the trials of faith; and that is, that they urge us to the most strenuous self-purification, and fervent piety. I believe that it is an express law of the religious progress, that the advancement and strength of our faith, other things being equal, are always in proportion to the fervour and purity of our religious affections. This law results from the very nature of the subjects to which it relates. Our faith in Christianity, for instance, and in a future life, is not a

deduction of abstract reasoning, irrespective of ourselves, and of the character of God, or of the nature of the communication as compared with them. Belief is *grounded*, in part, on certain views of our nature and wants, and on certain views of the character of God. Now, none but a pure and spiritual mind can estimate the transcendent worth of its own nature, or can so love God, as to entertain a just view of his love to us, and to hope all that the filial mind *will* hope from him. Self-purification, therefore, is an essential part of the progress to light and certainty.

In this progress, not a few have arrived to the very confines of the land of vision. Their faith has become scarcely less than assurance. Invisible things have not only become the great realities, as they are to all men of true faith; but they have become, as it were, almost visible; there is a presence of God, felt, and almost seen, in all nature and life; there is, in the heart, an assurance, a feeling of heaven and immortality. So it is oftentimes with the good man in the approach to death; the veil of flesh is almost rent from him; the shadows of mortal imperfection are disappearing; the threshold of heaven is gained; and beamings, from the ever-bright regions, fill his soul with their blessed light. Then it is, that it is hard to return to life; to pass again beneath the shadow; to feel the cold, dull realities of life effacing the impressions of heavenly beauty and glory. This is sometimes looked upon, I know, as a kind of hallucination, a visionary rapture; and so it sometimes may be; but the truth is, that in the purified mind, it is the result of principles in accordance with the strictest reason. The explanation is, that such a mind is prepared to receive the full and entire impression of the objects of faith; the light of heaven is indeed around that mind; because it is an image, pure, and polished, and bright, to *reflect* the light of heaven.

True faith is, *indeed*, a great and sublime quality. It is greater, I am persuaded, than it is commonly accounted to be, much as it is exalted, and lauded in religious discourses. It is sometimes lauded, indeed, at the expense of reason. It is often so represented as if its sublimity consisted in its being a mystical quality, in its superiority to works, to the labours of duty, to the exercise of the quiet and patient virtues. To the hearer of such representations, it often seems as if this glory and charm of faith lay in a sort of visionary peace of mind, obtained without any reference to the culture of the mind or of the heart. But, no; the very reverse of this is the truth. Faith is a great and sublime quality, because it is founded in eternal reason; because it is a patient and faithful inquirer, and not a hasty and self-confident rejector, not an idolizer of its own fanciful and visionary suggestions of doubt. It is great too, because it is moral; because as an Apostle declares, it works by love, and purifies the heart; because it is an elevation of the soul towards the purity and glory of the only and independently great and glorious Being. It is great, moreover, and in fine, because it is a principle of perpetual advancement. It does not write down its creed, as if it could never go beyond that; as if that were its standard and its limit; as if that were the sum and the perfection of all that it could ever receive. No: it is a sublime principle, because it takes hold of the sublimity of everlasting progress. When it reaches a brighter sphere; when it no longer knows in part, but knows as it is known; when its contemplation has become actual vision, and its deductions have risen

to assume the certainty and take the place of first principles; then will it, on the basis of these first principles, proceed to still farther deductions. Still and ever will the fields of inquiry lie before it—far and for ever before it. Onward and onward will they spread, beneath other heavens, to other horizons—bright regions, leading to yet brighter regions—boundless worlds for thought to traverse, beyond the track of solar day—where—where shall its limit be!—what eye can pursue its flight through the infinitude of ages!

Christian! wouldst thou make that boundless, that glorious career thine own? Then be faithful to the light that now shines around thee. Sink not to rest or slumber beneath the passing shadows of doubt. To sink—to sleep, is not thy destination, but to wake—to rise. Rise, then, to the glorious pursuit of truth; connect with it the work of self-purification; open thy mind to heavenly hope; aspire to the life everlasting! Count it not a strange thing that thou hast difficulties and doubts. Well has it been said, that he who never doubted, never believed. Shrink not and be not afraid, when that cloud passeth over thee. *Through* the cloud, still press onward. Only be assured of this, and with this assurance be of good courage—God made thee to believe. Without faith, the ends of thy being cannot be accomplished, and therefore, it is certain that he made thee to believe. In perfect confidence, then, say this with thyself,—"I am *sure* that I shall *believe:* all that is necessary for me, I *shall* believe; in the faithful and humble use of my faculties, I am assured that I shall come to this result. I fear not doubt; I fear not darkness; doubt is the way to faith, and darkness is the way to light." Come, holy light! come, blessed faith! and cheer every humble seeker with joy unspeakable and full of glory!

And it *will* come to every true and trusting heart. Why do I say this? Because, I still repeat, I know that God made our nature for faith, and virtue, and improvement. Why should it be difficult to see this? And are not scepticism, and sin, and the process of moral deterioration—are they not misery, and darkness, and destruction, to our nature? Look at the young tree of the forest. Are you not sure that God made it to grow? And can you doubt that he made your moral nature, to grow and flourish? But how does he make *that tree* to grow? By pouring perpetual sunshine upon it? No; he sends the storm and the tempest upon it; the overshadowing cloud lowers upon its waving top—and its branches wrestle with the rude elements. So is it with human faith. Amidst storm and calm, amidst cloud and sunshine alike, it rises and rises, stronger and stronger—till it is transplanted at length to the fair clime of heaven; there to grow and blossom, amidst everlasting light, in everlasting beauty.

CURSORY OBSERVATIONS

ON THE QUESTIONS AT ISSUE BETWEEN ORTHODOX AND LIBERAL CHRISTIANS.*

NO. I. INTRODUCTORY.

In offering to the Public a series of cursory and miscellaneous remarks on the questions between the Orthodox and Liberal parties, I am disposed, at the outset, to say something by way of apology. My defence might perhaps justly relate to other and more important particulars, but I confess, that the feeling I had most to contend with, in myself, and I suppose it exists in others, is a strong reluctance to come into that collision with others, with opponents, I mean, to which controversy leads. The case, I must think, is a peculiarly hard one on our side of the question. I know, at least, that it involves many painful feelings.

Men do not often nor easily place themselves in the situation of others; least of all, of their opponents. The dominant sect of a country little know to what they subject an individual, when they cut him off from so many of the sympathies of the social world around him. To a man who has spent his youth in severe and wasting studies, with the honourable and ardent hope of being useful and acceptable to his fellow-men, who, with patient inquiries and earnest prayers, has sought for truth; who, in deep and solitary meditations, has sought for the pure fountains of all generous and holy influences wherewith he might nourish and quicken the piety of others — to such an one it is hard to meet with no welcome in the countenance and manners of society; nay, to meet with suspicion and hostility where he looked for welcome, to be summoned to strife, where he desired peace and amity, to be brought to the bar as an accused person, when he hoped to be hailed as the messenger of glad tidings. And he feels — the honest and affectionate

* I mean no offence by this designation of the parties. If the words, Orthodox and Liberal, be taken in a literal sense, then, of course, I claim to be orthodox, and I do not deny that others are liberal. But I take the terms as they are used in common parlance; and I prefix them to this series of articles, because no other cover the whole ground of the discussion. In any view, if others assume the title of Orthodox, I think they cannot charge us with presumption, if we adopt the title of Liberal.

advocate of religion feels, that he has glad tidings to communicate. His heart is ready to kindle with his theme; he would spread before mankind the venerable and lovely perfections of God; he would call and win them to piety, and virtue, and glory; he would gladly cherish the tenderness, and love, and charity, that belong to a mission so sacred and merciful; and how is his heart smitten within him, to reflect that all these sentiments and affections are denied to him, that he is looked upon as engaged in a bad work, that multitudes regard his doctrine, and preaching, and person, with aversion or horror! Besides, that must be a bad mind, indeed, to which contention is not in itself painful. Who does not feel sometimes tempted to leave the world to its controversies, to leave the opposing sects to fight it out among themselves, if they will,—to withdraw from the visible ranks of all religious denominations, and to take his way, alone and peacefully, to the grave, where all these strifes are so soon to be composed? Who that feels how many are the *necessary* trials of life, how becoming are sympathy, and pity, and forbearance, in such a world as this, how great is the moral work which he and every man has to do, and how solemn is the destiny of eternity; who, I say, feeling all this, does not grow sick at the thoughts of contending with his brethren in ignorance, and frailty, and affliction, his brethren in the great errand and end of life, his brethren in the solemn account of an hereafter.

I confess, that under the influence of these considerations, I am sometimes ready to shrink from what I do nevertheless conceive to be the duty of contending earnestly for those principles, which I hold to be the faith once delivered to the saints. So far as I might consult the first feelings and impulses natural to me as a citizen, a friend, a social man, I should sedulously avoid it. I should choose to pass in society without attracting any attention to my religious belief. I should reserve the comfort and joy of religious fellowship for my intercourse with those who would meet me in the affection and confidence of that fellowship. I would endeavour so to enjoy that privilege, as not to have the reflection forced upon me, that I am surrounded by suspicions and strifes, or by benevolent, though as I think mistaken, anxieties and regrets.

If, then, I address any who have a strong aversion to controversial discussions, I may safely affirm that I feel it not less than they. I have a good mind, at times, to sweep from my table every controversial book, tract, publication, Review, and Newspaper, and henceforth to know nothing, and to care nothing about them—to know nothing and to care for nothing but religion as a general subject of contemplation, and a guide and comfort of life. There is no honour nor comfort to be reaped from these contests; and to the honourable, the liberal, the better and more sacred feelings of the mind, they are attended with no little danger. I said, no comfort. There is the satisfaction, indeed, arising from the discharge of what is believed to be a duty; and that, I trust, is the consideration that, with me, settles the question. This *must* be the repose of faithful and honest minds, engaged in controversy with those whom they would fain regard as brethren and friends.

And it is my purpose (as I have partly intimated), in these introductory remarks, to meet the natural reluctance which many feel to read anything of a controversial nature.

I say, then, that *the state of the public mind demands investigations of this kind.* The age is thoroughly agitated with questions of all sorts, political, moral, and religious—with all those questions, especially, which bear upon human happiness. On all these questions, and in foreign countries, even, on that of the diffusion of knowledge, there is a liberal party, and an orthodox party—or, in other words, there are advocates of new opinions, and adherents of old opinions. But of all the questions that thus agitate the general mind, none bear more directly upon the general welfare than those which are religious. None, indeed, do more palpably affect the *rights* of men. None do *so* vitally affect their happiness. For it is when my soul is defended, and my political freedom secured, and I go and sit down under the shadow of my own dwelling with none to disturb or make me afraid; it is then, and after all that, that the great question is to be settled in the feelings and habits of my own mind, *whether or not I shall be happy.* And it is here in this interior, this secret and silent world of thoughts and purposes, of moral ideas and contemplations and affections, that religion has the amplest scope and the widest dominion.

Something of this is beginning to be felt; and men, at least, men generally, are inquiring, as they never before inquired, for the difference between truth and error, right and wrong, pure religion and needless superstition. And he who can be insensible to the importance of these inquiries, or can turn indifferently away from them as not worth his regard, understands neither the discussion, nor the duty it devolves upon him.

It is, by no means, a light discussion; and this is the second consideration which bears upon the question of duty in the controversy of the age. It is a great controversy. It is not about the minor forms and features of religion. It is not about a church government or ritual. It is, in part, about the very nature of morality and piety. It is mainly a practical question. It is not even concerning the Trinity that we are most deeply interested, as a matter of controversy. That seems to me a scholastic question; and more properly to belong to a scholastic age. And, in fact, it is only from the strong practical cast, which the spirit of the present age gives to every discussion, that this question of the Trinity is brought into such earnest debate. That is to say, it is not because the question, as I apprehend it, has any important and immediate bearing upon the nature of religion or the character of God, but because it is *artificially* mingled with the practical popular system of the age, that it has any considerable interest. The *great* questions, at issue, are these: What is the true character, the real, moral perfection of God, and what is the system of religious sentiments that truly illustrates his character and perfection? What is it to be a good man and a Christian? What constitutes the true preparation of a moral being for happiness, and God's favour, here and hereafter, and what is the true, right, and best method of making that preparation? What are the just principles of Christian Catholicism and candour, and in what consists the violation of these principles? Or, to bring the same question into a briefer statement, the great inquiry of the age is, how shall a man regard his Maker—the character, providence, and revelations of his Maker; himself—his nature, his welfare, and duty; and his fellow-beings—their feelings, interests, and inquiries, on the subject

of religion? These, I say, are the great questions; and no man, who reflects deeply, can help feeling that they are questions of momentous concern. They come home to our bosoms. They enter deeply into the essential welfare of our minds. And no weak, or morbid sensibility to the trials of controversy should withhold us from discussions that thus touch the vital interests of our being. I do not say, indeed, that such discussions *altogether* involve those interests. There are good men on both sides, in this controversy. But it does nevertheless *affect* their most precious interests; and that is enough to give it a claim upon our attention.

On the great questions at issue, both parties, of course, believe their adversaries to be in error. And I shall now undertake to state, in the third place, what are the errors, as we conceive them, in the popular system of religion, which we are bound, believing them such, not only to reject, but to oppose.

After all that is said and written on this subject, I do not think that the practical features and bearings of this system are made sufficiently conspicuous, and, therefore, I shall endeavour to unfold them in their true *moral* character, and with a careful regard, at the same time, to the most recent explanations.

The popular, or Calvinistic system, then, teaches that all men by nature are totally depraved. That is to say, the moral constitution of men as certainly develops sin and sin only, as their intellectual constitution develops memory or reason. There is amiableness, indeed, and a seeming goodness; but it is only seeming. According to the only true and righteous judgment of God and good men, everything in the human heart, and everything actually proceeding from it, is utterly wicked and abominable; and all the current language of discrimination, between the good and bad qualities of the mass of society around us, is the fruit of entire mistake and delusion, — for the simple reason, that there is *really* nothing *good* among them; that men, in general, are in every thought, word, and deed, only, and altogether, and always, *bad!* This entire wickedness, thus inevitably flowing from the very constitution which God has given to men, or from the circumstances in which he has placed them, is charged upon them as the most unspeakable guilt; such a guilt as to render an infinite atonement necessary. And here, in the popular system, is introduced the practical use of the doctrine of the Trinity. For it is contended, that, in order to expiate this guilt, and to render it proper that God should pardon it, it was necessary that the Almighty himself, in the second person of the Trinity, should take to himself human nature; and, that this complex being, one part of whom was the immaculate and omnipresent God, should hang upon the cross, and there die, as truly as ever any human culprit did. But this is only one of the doctrines that have sprung from the original stock, — viz. the native and total depravity of men. This depravity of course implies an absolute and supreme unwillingness to be good and holy: so that it is rendered just as certain, that man, without the special interposition of God, will never fail or cease to sin, when the object of sinful affection is presented, as that he will never fail to think, when the object of thought is presented. This is the much explained doctrine of *moral inability*. It is not that a man is unable to be holy, in the same sense in which he is unable to lift a tree of the forest

from its roots. It is a *moral* inability, say its advocates: but still it *is* an inability, as invincible, as immoveable, by human power, though not in the same sense immoveable, as the oak of the forest. In other words, it is an unwillingness, originated in the soul by the will or by the Providence of Him who made it, springing up with the first exertion of its moral faculties, occupying and possessing the *whole moral being* of a man, and leaving in it, therefore, no prop, no power, whereby a holy disposition may be raised up. That disposition, whenever formed, arises, it is said, from no antecedent willingness in the sinful creature, but from the interposing and special grace of God. And this leads us to notice the most distressing and tremendous feature of the whole system. The needful grace is withholden from multitudes; or, to use the most mild and cautious language, this special grace does not act, does not take effect upon multitudes. And, therefore, as an inevitable consequence, these multitudes, only for conforming to a law of their *being* or *condition*, no matter which — only for acting as they are certain to do, are doomed to remediless, endless, infinite woes! The being, born with the seeds of this awful malady within him, lives till they develop in his constitution the fatal disease, and then, after, it may be, one day or one month of suffering under this sickness, which he could not originally prevent, he is, *for* this sickness, a cherished, if you choose to say so, but still a natural sickness — he is sent down to those fires of hell, which, though they will burn for ever, will never purge away one plague-spot of the foul and loathsome distemper!

This is no fiction, no awful dream, no vision of horror, visiting the distempered imagination through the curtain of darkness and night: but it is an open and daylight reality, declared in the high places of the pulpit, preached to congregations of men, with all their waking senses and faculties about them. Awful as the statement is, I have weighed every word of it with extreme caution, and delivered it on mature deliberation; and I ask any intelligent Calvinist to deny it in any part or particular. It would give me the sincerest pleasure, if one step in this terrific procession of doctrines were denied to belong to it, — if one link in that iron chain, which seems to me to bind justice and mercy equally, were fairly and for ever broken. Should any Calvinist revolt at the representation, then I would ask him to specify the part he would give up. I would say to him, — "Do you not believe that the nature of a man is what God gives him, and that this nature in every man is totally depraved? Or do you not believe that this nature is placed in such a condition, that total depravity is the certain result? Is not this total depravity an entire unwillingness to be holy? Is not this unwillingness, being total, so strong as to make it certain, in the eye of God, that, without his special interposition, it will continue till death? And continuing thus, is it not the very thing — though it sprang from nature, though it was just as certain to be developed in the constitution of man, as the appetite of hunger, or the faculty of reason — is it not the very thing, this native, total depravity, that will fix upon a man, according to your doctrine, the doom of endless suffering?"

And if all this be true, what is its aspect, I solemnly ask, towards piety, towards all our reverent, grateful, and affectionate thoughts of God? Would *any* man, I seriously ask, be willing to take to himself the character which he thus ascribes to his Maker? Would any parent

be, for the world, thought capable of treating his children thus — or any king, his subjects — or any master, his servants? And is there no reason for pausing at a system, which thus shocks all the moral sentiments of mankind?

And yet, this is the system that professes itself to be the only, and exclusively TRUE GOSPEL! And *it is this language of exclusion*, which I notice as a final reason for calling it into discussion.

A respectable body of men, against whom no prevailing corruption or viciousness is even alleged, who were once accounted as faithful and pious as any other men, have, after long, patient, and prayerful inquiry, arrived at the sincere and solemn conviction, that the doctrines of Calvinism are not the doctrines of Christ. We profess to revere and receive that Teacher and Saviour, but we see his instructions in a different light from our brethren. And now, what is the treatment we meet with? and what, I add, is our duty in the circumstances?

The treatment is but too well known. The very name of Christians is denied us. In the current nomenclature of the day, we are denied a place among the denominations called Christians.

Our duty, I believe, is earnest remonstrance. We hold this name too dear, to be silently bereft of it. "Jesus Christ is precious to us, as he is to all them that believe." His character, his revelations, his doctrines, his promises, lay us under an obligation, and fill us, we trust, with a gratitude, which do not permit us calmly to bear the imputation of being his rejectors and enemies. Our accusers might well denominate us cold and indifferent to the Gospel, if we could sit down silently under this imputation.

I do hold that this is a very serious matter, and one that ought to be brought into discussion. For the controversy has come to this. It is not so much between Calvinists and Arminians, Trinitarians and Unitarians, as between the EXCLUSIVE SECT and the CATHOLIC SECT. These are the parties now arrayed against each other. It is on this ground that a new division of the community is taking place. And for my own part, it is the only question that has ever touched me very nearly. That a man is a Calvinist or a Trinitarian does not offend me. He differs with me only in the matter of a metaphysical creed. I can still have the most agreeable conversation, and happy intercourse, and intimate friendship, with him. But if he says, "I cannot acknowledge you as a Christian; you hold a belief which undermines the very foundation of piety and of all religious virtue; I consider you, and all who believe with you, as preparing for the fellowship of accursed spirits;" if this is the language he holds, or if this is the meaning of his heart, the case is totally changed. All valuable ties between us are broken. I want no hollow courtesies from that man. I can understand no hair-breadth distinctions, between a good man and a bad Christian. I know of but one kind of goodness, but one kind of worth, but one kind of piety; and if he denies me that, there is no foundation for respect and confidence, and without respect and confidence, there can be no friendship nor society. I wish the man, who denies me these, no ill. I will feed him, if he is hungry; I will clothe him, if he is naked; and if needy, I will accept the same offices from him. But for the intercourse of minds, for the best ties of society, no ground nor support is left.

And how unfortunate is it — for I am glad to forsake the crimina-

tory part of this discussion, which no man can have been more reluctant to read, than I have been to write — how unfortunate is it, I say, that these ties should be broken! Here is a community of beings, frail, ignorant, erring, liable to prejudices, beset with difficulties in the way to truth; and how much might they help each other by quitting the banded ranks of party, and mingling together in a respectful and confiding intercourse, by visiting at each other's houses, and sitting down in each other's churches, and listening to each other's arguments and explanations, and witnessing the spirit of prayer which, I doubt not, would be found in both. Can any reasonable man help feeling that this is the proper attitude for those to take, who differ in the solemn concerns of a salvation, alike precious, eternally precious to all? Could any good man help delighting to see them meeting and mingling, on terms like these? Behold, how good and pleasant a thing is it for brethren — and we are all brethren, in frailty, in affliction, in anxiety, and in the great hope of salvation — Behold, how good and pleasant a thing is it for brethren to agree! Agreed we should be in spirit, in desire, in prayer, and we might soon agree in faith. Would we thus help each other, "we might all soon come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, and unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

CURSORY OBSERVATIONS.

NO. II.—ON THE TRINITY.

What is the doctrine of the Trinity? It is, that the Almighty Father is God; that Jesus, whom he sent into the world, is God; and that the Holy Spirit—represented also as a separate agent—is God; and yet that these three, "equal in power and glory," are but one God. This is what the advocate of the Trinity *says*. But now let me ask him to consider what it is that he *thinks:* not what are the words he uses, but what are his actual conceptions. If he conceives of only one God—one Infinite Mind—and then if all that he means by the Trinity is, that the Saviour and the Holy Spirit partook, in some sense, of the nature of God; this is nothing materially different from what we all believe. If he means that the Father, Son, and Spirit, are only representations of the same God, acting in their characters, then he is not a Trinitarian, but a Sabellian. But if he goes farther, and attempts to grasp the real doctrine of the Trinity; if he attempts to conceive of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, as possessing each a distinct existence, consciousness, and volition—as holding counsel and covenant with each other; then, though he may call these Three one—though he may repeat it to himself all the day long, that they are but one; yet does he actually conceive of them as three agents, three beings, three Gods? The human mind, I aver, is so constituted, that it *cannot* conceive of three agents, sustaining to each other the relations asserted by the doctrine of the Trinity, without conceiving of them as three Gods.

Let the reader keep his mind free from all confusion on this point, arising from Christ's incarnation, or adoption of human nature. *Before* that event, the distinction is held by Trinitarians to be just as marked as it is now. Then it was that the Father covenanted with the Son. Then it was that the Son offered to assume human nature, and not the Father. Then it was, that the Father promised to the Son that he should "see the travail of his soul and be satisfied." Then it was that the Father sent the Son into the world. Is it possible for any human mind to contemplate these relations, without conceiving of those between whom they existed, as two distinct, self-conscious Beings? I aver that it is not. The Father, by supposition, must have known that he was not the Son. The Son must have known that he was not the Father. Two, who speak to one another—who confer together—the one of whom commissions, the other is commissioned—the one of whom sends the other into the world—these two are, to every human mind so contemplating them, and are, in spite of itself, two beings. If not, then

there is nothing in the universe answering to the idea of two beings. We all partake of a common humanity; and it might just as well be maintained that all *men* are one being, as that the three in the Trinity are one being.

In simple truth, I do not see why any reader on this subject need go farther than this. Till something credible is offered to be proved—till something better than absolute self-contradiction is proposed as a matter of belief, who is bound to attend to the argument?

I mean no discourtesy nor injustice to the Trinitarian, unless argument shall be thought such. I know that he supposes himself to hold a theory which escapes from the charge of self-contradiction. But so long as he says that the Father sent the Son, and that these two are one and the same being, I believe that he does not and cannot escape from it. I know that he professes to believe in one God; and in truth —in all his practical and devotional thoughts—whenever he prays to the Father *through* the Son—he is, and his mind compels him to be, *virtually a Unitarian*. And this doubtless is, and always has been, the state of the general mind. Practical Unitarianism has always been the general faith of Christendom. Even when, as in the Roman Church, and sometimes in the Protestant, men have prayed to Jesus Christ, it would be found, if their thoughts could be confessed, that they have forgotten the Father for the time, and their error has not consisted in Tritheism, but in clothing the Being, called Jesus, with the attributes of sole Divinity. Still, though erring, they have been practical Unitarians. But scholastic men have always been weaving theories, at variance with the popular and effective belief. Half of the history of philosophy might be written in illustration of this single point. Such a theory, I conceive, is the Trinity. It has existed in studies, in creeds, in theses, in words; but not in the actual conceptions of men, not in their heartfelt belief. From the days when Tertullian complained in the second century, that the common people would not receive this doctrine, and down through all the ages of seeming assent, and to this very day, I believe that it has ever been the same dead letter. And when Christianity has fairly thrown off this incumbrance, as I believe it will, I have no doubt that many will say, what not a few are saying now, "we never did believe in the Trinity; we always felt that the Son was inferior to the Father who sent him."

But how, then, I may be asked, does it come to pass, that this doctrine is honestly and earnestly maintained by a great many able and learned men, to be accordant with the teachings of Scripture? Because, I answer, that, on a certain theory of interpretation, there is a great deal of proof for it from Scripture; while upon another and true principle, I firmly believe that there is none at all.

Let me invite the reader's attention, for a few moments, to the consideration of this point—the *true* principle of interpretation. My own conviction is, that it settles the whole question; but at any rate, I cannot, in this cursory view which I am taking, go over the ground of the whole argument; and therefore I shall confine myself to the most material point at issue.

We must all have seen by this time—indeed I think the whole Christian world must have perceived, how impossible it is to settle any question from the Scriptures, by bare textual discussion. Texts may

be arrayed against texts, and have been for ages, and might be, from *any* mass of writings like the Scriptures; they might be, and have been, thus arrayed by the parties to every religious controversy, with very little tendency to produce conviction, so long as the true principle of their interpretation was disregarded. So long as texts are considered by themselves alone—considered as independent passages, uncontrolled by any such principle, one text is as good as another; and thus Christian sects have presented the strange anomaly—the wonder of observers, the scorn of infidels—of being directly at issue on the clearest points of Christian doctrine, all armed with proof passages, all equally confident, and all with equal assurance condemning each other.

What is to account for this phenomenon? There are other causes, indeed, but I am persuaded that the main cause lies in the peculiarity of treatment to which the Scriptures have been subjected. There is doubtless a superstructure of passion, prejudice, pride, and worldly interest; but resting ostensibly, as it does on the Scriptures, there must be some error touching the very interpretation of them.

Let me now more distinctly state, what are the two principles or theories of interpretation, by which it is proposed to explain the language of Scripture on this subject. For the Trinitarian has his theory, his humanly devised theory, and his reasoning, and what he considers his rational principle of exposition, as much as the Unitarian. The difference is not, though it is often alleged, that the Unitarian relies more upon reasoning, independent of Scripture; but, as I conceive, that he relies upon a more rational, a more natural, and a really sounder principle of interpretation. The Trinitarian says,—"Here are two classes of passages—those which describe an *inferior*, and those which describe a *superior* nature. We receive both classes without admitting any qualification, or limitation of sense in either. One class of texts ascribes human qualities to Jesus; therefore, he is man; another ascribes divine works and offices; therefore, he is God; and we dare not explain them into what we might imagine to be a consistency with each other, as we should any other history, concerning any other person. We receive the contrasted portions of this history just as they stand; holding it to be not our business to explain, but only to believe."

By this theory, undoubtedly, the Trinity can be proved. By this theory a *double nature* in Christ can be proved. And by this theory, do I seriously aver that Transubstantiation, Anthropomorphism, and irreconcilable contradictions in the divine nature, can be proved; Transubstantiation—the doctrine that the sacramental bread and wine are the real body and blood of Christ; for while, in one class of passages, these elements are called bread and wine; in another, doth not our Saviour say, "this is my body—this is my blood?"—Anthropomorphism—for while we are taught that God is a spirit, is he not said to have hands, eyes—to walk on the earth, &c.?—irreconcilable contradictions in his nature—for while we are taught that God is unchangeable, is he not represented as repenting, that he had made man—repenting, that he had made Saul king? Upon what principle is it, that such monstrous conclusions are avoided? Upon a principle, I answer, that is fatal to the Trinitarian theory of interpretation. It is the principle that words are not to be taken by themselves in the Bible; that limitations and qualifications in their meaning must be admitted, in order to

make any sense; that the Scriptures are, in this respect, to be interpreted like other books; that when human language is adopted as the instrument of a divine communication, it may fairly be presumed that it is subject to the laws of that instrument; and that no other principle of criticism can save the Bible, or any other book, from the imputation of utter absurdity and folly.

This I understand to be the Unitarian theory of interpretation. They reader will perceive at once that just this difference of theory will bring out precisely the difference of results, that characterize these two classes of believers. Which, then, is the true theory?

It seems to me that the case speaks for itself; that all common sense, all usage, all criticism, all tolerable commentary on the Bible, sufficiently declares which is the right principle.

But let us appeal to undeniable authority—that of the sacred teachers themselves—that of the Bible interpreting itself.

For the application of our principle of interpretation to the very subject before us, we have the authority of Jesus Christ himself; and the application is as clear and decisive, as the appeal, with every Christian, must be final and ultimate. I allude to that most extraordinary passage, in John x. 30—36,—most extraordinary I mean in reference to this controversy: and I propose to make it the subject of considerable comment and argument.

What is the question, in the passage here referred to? I answer,—the very question, which is now virtually before us,—did Jesus claim to be God? What was the language of our Saviour? "God is my Father: I and my Father are one." What was the accusation of the Jews? "Thou blasphemest—and, being a man, makest thyself God:" the very allegation on which Trinitarianism is founded. It was once a cavil: it is now a creed. And now I ask, in the name of reason, and truth, and Scripture, how does our Saviour treat it? His answer, be it remembered, in the first place, is a solemn and absolute *denial* of the allegation, that he had made himself God! "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?" Our Saviour had used strong language concerning himself. He had said, "as the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father;" referring, however, as I suppose, not to the extent, but to the certainty of the knowledge. He had said, "I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones to cast at him;" they accused him of blasphemy; they said, "thou makest thyself God." Jesus denies that the language he had used warrants the inference they drew from it. This is the second point. He denies their inference. He clearly implies, moreover, that stronger language still would not warrant the inference. He tells the cavilling Jews, that even those "to whom the word of God came" had been "called gods." And then, so far from declaring himself to be God, he speaks of himself as one whom God "had sanctified and sent into the world;" and as, on that account, entitled to speak of himself in exalted terms.

And yet, how astonishing is it, we may observe, by the bye, that this very language, "I and my Father are one," concerning which, and

much stronger language too, he had declared its insufficiency to prove him God—this very language, I say, and other similar phraseology, is constantly quoted to prove the Supreme Deity of the Son of God! Words, once caught up by gainsayers, and by them wrested into a charge against our Saviour of assuming Divinity, and denied by him to be any legitimate proof of such an allegation, now help to support the faith of multitudes in this very allegation, as a portion, and a most essential portion, of the Christian doctrine!

I say that our Saviour appeals to a principle of interpretation. Those, in ancient times, "to whom the word of God came," were men, ordinary men; and when they were called gods, this language was limited in its force by their known character. No one could think of taking this language for what it meant considered by itself, and without any qualification. But our Saviour was an extraordinary personage, and he argues that words of much loftier import might be applied to him, without furnishing any warrant for the inference, that he was God; and he absolutely contradicts the inference.

Let us now apply in another way the reasoning with which our Saviour confounded the Jews.

I suppose it will be admitted that the words, "I and my Father are one," do not prove our Saviour to be God; since he himself expressly disallows the inference. Now, is there any language in the Bible concerning Christ, that is stronger than this? Is there any of all the proof texts, that is stronger? I confess that I know of none. This is the very language of the popular creed; not that the Father and the Son are two Gods, but that they are one. And so exactly does it express the Orthodox belief, that, *notwithstanding* our Saviour's disclamation, it is constantly used to convey the idea that he was God. His disclamation, however, settles the matter entirely. And I suppose that an intelligent reasoner on the Trinitarian side, would say,—"it is true the words here used do not prove Jesus to be God. Still, however, he may be God. He was reasoning with the Jews on a particular charge. The charge was, that he had, by *the language he used*, made himself God. He simply denies that this particular language warrants their inference." Is not this, however, at the least, a very extraordinary supposition? It makes our Saviour say with himself—"true I *am* God; and being so, I have used language very naturally expressive of that fact. However, I can reason it away with these people, on the ground of their own Scriptures, and I will do so. I *am* God, indeed; but I will deny this inference of the Jews, though it amounts to the exact truth. I will deny it, though I thereby mislead them altogether and infinitely, as to my true character." This, I say, would be our Saviour's reasoning with himself on the Trinitarian hypothesis. But the truth is, this supposition, improper and incredible as it is, will not save the doctrine. Because this language, which our Saviour declares insufficient to prove him God, is, in fact, as strong as any language that the advocates of that doctrine adduce. If this language does not fairly prove him to be God, then no language in the Bible does.

Let us suppose, to put this in another form, that the New Testament in all its doctrinal parts,—that is to say, that the Epistles had been written, and all had been completed before our Saviour's death; and that our Trinitarians could have said to him after the manner of the

Jews, "Thy disciples, whom thou hast commissioned to declare the truth, make thee to be God." I conceive that Jesus might have given the same answer as he did to his Jewish accusers. He would say, "No; in all writings it is common to speak of men according to their distinction; nor is there any need, on the principles of ordinary interpretation and sense, of guarding and restraining the natural language of admiration and love. The ancient Jews were called gods, because the word of God came to them. And I, *on account of my Messiahship*, may properly be spoken of, and spoken of *in that character*, much more strongly."

But, to bind the argument more closely, and to render it, as I think, incontrovertible, let me add, that the matter which I now state is not a matter of supposition, but of fact. Jesus *is* spoken of, and that frequently, *in his simple character of Messiah*—that is to say, *as* inferior—as confessedly inferior—as an *official* person he is spoken of as strongly as he is anywhere. Observe the following language:—"For by him were all things created that are in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." There is no stronger language than this. And yet, for all this, Jesus is represented as dependent on the good pleasure of God. "*For—for* it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." I suppose this to be that moral creation, that creating anew of many souls, which Jesus by his doctrine has effected, together with that influence upon the visible kingdoms of the world, which his doctrine has unquestionably produced. Again; we read of Jesus Christ as being "far above principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come;" and again, I say, there is no stronger language than this. But it is expressly said, that God "SET him above all principality," &c. How directly are we led back from these passages, to our Saviour's principle of interpretation! And as if there should be no doubt about the subordinate and temporary character of this distinction, high as it was, we are expressly told, that "when the end shall come,"—when according to the Trinitarian hypothesis, we expect to see Jesus ascend to his primeval dignity as God—when "all things shall be subdued unto him," lo! "then shall he be subject unto him that put all things under him; that God may be all in all." And as if to warrant the very principle of interpretation, on which I am insisting—as if to show that nothing that is said of the glory of our Saviour, is to be taken in derogation from the supremacy of God, it is said in this very connexion, "But when it is said, *all* things are put under him, *it is manifest* that he is excepted who did put all things under him." As if it were said—nay it is said—that nothing written concerning the greatness of Jesus is to bring into question the unrivalled supremacy of God.

And let me add, that this provides us with an answer to the only objection that stands in our way. It may be said that there are still passages, whose force is not controlled by any express qualification. I answer that it *is* nevertheless fairly controlled by the general sense of the book. The certain truth, that there is but one God; the constant ascription of that supremacy to the Father, the constant declaration,

that Jesus owed everything to God, justly limits the sense of those passages which ascribe to the Saviour a lofty distinction. This is according to the usage of all writings. Suppose that when the biographer had said of Bonaparte, that "his footstep shook the Continent," or of Mr. Pitt, that he "struck a blow in Europe, that resounded through the world," or the poet, of Milton,—

> "He passed the flaming bounds of space and time,
> The living throne, the sapphire-blaze;"

suppose, I say, that he immediately added, and in every such instance added, that he did not mean to be taken literally—that he did not mean that the personage in question was a demi-god; would anything be more unnatural and unnecessary? Were any writings ever composed upon this plan?

What then is the conclusion at which we arrive? The very objection which we are considering, in fact, gives up the whole argument. For it is admitted by this objection, that *if* the qualification had been constantly introduced—that is to say, if *every time* that any lofty distinction had been ascribed to Jesus, it had been expressly said that "God gave him this"—that "God had set him there"—it is admitted, I say, that by this constantly repeated qualification, the whole Trinitarian argument would have been completely overthrown. Is it possible then, for the Trinitarian expositor, interpreting the Bible on the same principle that he does other books, to maintain his argument? If he does so, I fearlessly assert, that he gives up the principle. The moment he feels the Trinitarian ground strong beneath him, that moment he abjures the principle in his exposition—that moment he begins to say, "It is profane to interpret the Scriptures, as we do other books—the Scripture biography, as we do other biographies."

The fact is, and I must assert it, that the Trinitarian, with all his assumptions of exclusive reverence for the Bible, does *not* adhere to the Bible as his opponent does. If he would vindicate his claim, I should be glad to see a little more regard for Scripture usage in his doxologies and ascriptions. From all pulpits, at the close of almost every prayer, may be heard, on any Sunday, *formulas* of expression like these—nowhere to be found in the Bible—"And to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory:"—"To the holy and ever blessed Trinity; one God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be equal and undivided honours and praises."

And yet those who pass upon us such unscriptural theories, as we think them, and are constantly swaying the public mind, by using such confessedly unscriptural language, are, at the same time, perpetually charging us with rejecting the Bible and relying on our presumptuous reasonings, and with leaning, and more than leaning, to infidelity.

I repeat, in close, that the question between us is a question of interpretation. It is a question of "what saith the Scripture?" It amounts to nothing in view of this question, to tell me, that for many centuries the church has, in the body of it, believed this or that doctrine. The church, by the confession of us all, has believed many errors, for many centuries. It is worse yet, contemptuously or haughtily to say, that it is unlikely, any great or new truth in religion is now to be found out. Such a principle would stop the progress of the age. Such a principle

would have crushed the Reformation. Neither is our doctrine new, nor is it unhonoured, so far as human testimony can confer honour. It was the doctrine, as we firmly believe, of the primitive church. It has been held by many good men ever since. And when you come upon English ground—when you retrace the bright lineage of our English worthies, to whom do all eyes turn as the brightest in that line? Whose names have become household words, in all the dwellings of a reading and intelligent community? I answer, the names of Newton, and Locke, and Milton; and yet Newton, who not only read the stars—and Locke, who not only penetrated with patient study the secrets of the mind—and Milton, who not only soared into the heaven of poetry, and "passed the sapphire blaze, and saw the living throne"—all of whom read their Bibles too, and wrote largely upon the Scriptures—all these, after laborious investigation, concurred in rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity. What these men believed, is not to be accounted of mushroom growth. They were men not of parts and genius only, but men of solid and transcendent acquisitions and ever-during fame. I would not name them in the spirit of vain and foolish boasting. But I do say—and I would urge this consideration particularly—I do say, that the extraordinary circumstance, that these three men have been as distinguished for their study of the Bible, as they have been otherwise distinguished among the great and learned men of England—that this circumstance should lead every man to pause, before he rejects a doctrine which they believed. Much more does it become men of inferior parts and little learning, to abstain from pouring out contempt and anathemas upon a doctrine which Newton, and Locke, and Milton believed.

It is to little purpose, indeed, to lift up warnings and denunciations, and to awaken prejudice and hostility against the great doctrine on which Unitarianism is built—the simple Unity of God; and the entire inferiority, yet glorious distinction, of Jesus, as his Son and Messenger. This doctrine professes to stand securely on the foundation of Scripture. Argument, therefore, not passion, must supply the only effectual weapons against it. If this doctrine be wrong, may God speedily show it! If it be right, he will defend the right. Concerning all improper opposition, we might say to its opponents, in the words of Gamaliel, "Let it alone: for if this counsel, or this work, be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye *cannot* overthrow it; lest haply ye be found, even to fight against God."

CURSORY OBSERVATIONS.

NO. III. — ON THE ATONEMENT.

[I insert here, instead of the original article in the series, a Sermon on the Import and Intent of the Sufferings of Christ.]

1 Cor. ii. 2: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

The pre-eminence thus assigned to one subject of Christian teaching — the sufferings of Jesus—must command for it our serious attention. It is true that Paul did *not* mean to say, that he would not speak of anything but the passion of Christ; for he did speak of many other things. But it is quite clear that he did give to this subject, in the Christian system, an importance, pre-eminent—predominating over all others.

Why did he so? Why is the death of Jesus the highest subject in Christianity? Why is the cross the chiefest emblem of Christianity? Why has something like Paul's determination always been realized in the Christian church—to know nothing else? Why has it been celebrated, as nothing else has been celebrated? Why has an holy rite been especially ordained to show forth the death of Christ through all time? The brief answer to these questions is, that the substance, the subject-matter of Christianity, is the character of Christ, as the Saviour of men; and that the grandest revelation of his character and purpose was made on the cross. Of this revelation I am now to speak.

In entering upon this subject, I feel one serious difficulty. It has taken such hold of the superstition of mankind, that it is difficult to present it in its true, simple, natural, and affecting aspects. For this reason I shall not attempt to engage your minds in the ordinary course of a doctrinal discussion. I *cannot* discuss this solemn theme in a merely metaphysical manner. I cannot contemplate a death, and least of all, the death of the Saviour, only as a doctrine. It is to me, I must confess, altogether another kind of influence. It is to me, if it is anything, power and grandeur; it is something that rivets my eye and heart; it is a theme of admiration and spiritual sympathy; it leads me to meditation, not to metaphysics; it is as a majestic example, a moving testimony, a dread sacrifice, that I must contemplate it. I see in it a death-blow to sin; I hear the pleading of the crucified One for truth and salvation, beneath the darkened heavens and amidst the shuddering earth!

I mean to say, that all this is spiritual and practical. It amazes me, that this great event, which is filling all lands and all ages, yea, and is to fill eternity with its presence, should be resolved altogether—all gathered and stamped into a formula of faith. It is every way asto-

nishing to me, that such a speculative use should have been made of it; that suffering should have been seized upon as a subject for metaphysical analysis; that the agony of the Son of God should have been wrested into a thesis for the theologian; that a death should have been made a dogma; that blood should have been taken to write a creed; that Calvary should have been made the arena of controversy; that the cross, whereon Jesus, with holy candour and meekness, prayed for his enemies, saying, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do!" —that the cross should have been made a rack of moral torture for his friends, whereon, in all the valleys and upon all the hills of Christendom, they have been crucified by unkindness and exclusion—is there another such contradiction—is there another such phenomenon to be found, in all the strange history of the world? There have been martyrdoms recorded in the world's great story; but when before were martyrdoms wrought into sharp and reproachful metaphysics? There have been fields drenched with righteous blood; there have been lowly and lonely valleys, like those of Piedmont and Switzerland, where the sighs and groans of the crushed and bleeding have risen and echoed among the dark crags that surrounded them; but who ever thought of building up these dread testimonies of human suffering and fortitude into systems of doctrinal speculation?

Let me not be misunderstood. In the train of the world's history, as I follow it, I meet at length with a being, marked and singled out from all others. I read, in the Gospel, the wonderful account of the most wonderful personage that ever appeared on earth. Nothing, in the great procession of ages, ever bore any comparison with the majestic story that now engages my attention. I draw near and listen to this being, and he speaks as never man spake. By some strange power, which I never so felt before, he seems as no other master ever did,—he seems to speak to *me*. I follow him, as the course of his life leads me on. I become deeply interested, more than as for a friend, in everything he says, and does, and suffers. I feel the natural amazement at the resistance and hatred he meets with. I feel a rising glow in my cheek, at the indignities that are heaped upon him. I say with myself, "surely God will interpose for him!" I hear him speak obscurely of a death by violence; but, like the disciples, I cannot receive it. I look, rather, that some horses and chariots of fire, shall come and bear him up to heaven. But the scene darkens around him; more and more frequently fall from his lips the sad monitions of coming sorrow; he prepares a feast of friendship with his disciples, but he tells them that it is the last; he retires thence to the shades of Gethsemane; and lo! through those silent shades comes the armed band; he is taken with wicked hands; he is borne to the Judgment-Hall; he is invested with a bloody crown of thorns, and made to bear his cross amidst a jeering and insulting multitude; he is stretched upon that accursed tree; he expires in agony. Oh! where are now the hopes that he would do some great thing for the world! He seemed as one, who would save the world, and lo! he is crucified and slain! He seemed to hold in his bosom the great regenerative principle; he knew what was in man and what man wanted; he appeared as the hope of the world; and where now is that hope? Buried, intombed, quenched in the dark and silent sepulchre. All is over—all, to my worldly view, is ended. I wander away from

the scene in hopeless despair. I fall in company, as the narrative leads me on, with two of the scattered disciples going to Emmaus. And as we talk of these things, one joins us in our walk, and asks us what are these sad communings of ours. And we say, "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he says, what things? And we answer, concerning Jesus of Nazareth. Then expounds he to us the Scriptures; and says, ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?" In fine, he reveals himself unto us, and then vanishes away. And we say, "Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

In short, it is at this point, that a new view enters my mind of the sufferings of Jesus. The worldly views all pass away—the worldly views of death and defeat, of ignominy and ruin; and I see that through death it was that Jesus conquered. I see that his dying, even more than his living, is a ministration of power, and light, and salvation to the world. I see that that ignominy is glory; that those wounds are fountains of healing; that the cross, hitherto branded as the accursed tree, fit only for the execution of the vilest culprits, has become the emblem of everlasting honour.

Now, therefore, the death of Jesus becomes to me the one great revelation. I determine to know nothing else—nothing in comparison with it; nothing is of equal interest. All the glory of Christ's example, all the graciousness of his purposes, shines most brightly on the cross. It is the consummation of all, the finishing of all. The epitaph of Jesus, is the epitome of Christianity. The death of Jesus is the life of the world.

In saying this, I wish to utter no theological dogma, which shall be respectfully received as a mere dogma. I simply express what is, upon my own mind, the natural impression. I stand by the cross of Jesus—for no intervening ages can weaken the power of that manifestation—and what is its language to me? I will suppose myself to stand alone by that cross; I will suppose that I have never heard of any theological systems; I stand in the simplicity of the elder time, before any systems were invented. And what now is the first feeling that enters my mind, as I gaze upon that Sufferer?

I think I shall state the natural impression, taking into account all that I have known of Jesus, when I say that the first feeling is, that I am a sinner. It is ever the tendency of human guilt, on witnessing any great catastrophe, to exclaim, "I am a sinner." But this is not a catastrophe without an explanation. Let us see if my feeling is not right. I have heard all that Jesus has said of the supreme evil that sin is. I have seen how that one conviction rested upon his mind, and breathed out in all his teachings, that nothing beside is comparatively an evil. I have seen that it was on this very account, that he came on a mission of pity from the Father of mercies. I have heard all that he has said—my heart has been probed by his words, and I involuntarily exclaim, as I see him suspended on the cross, "Ah! sinful being that I am—that such an one should suffer for me. It is I that deserved to suffer; but God hath made him the propitiation for my sins. Could nothing else set forth before me the curse of sin? Could no other hand bear the burden of my redemption? Truly, I have sinned against the

gracious Father of my existence; I always knew it—I always felt that I had; but how is it shown to me now, when the love and pity of the infinite Father appears in this—that he spared not his own Son, but gave him to die for me. Oh! sore and bitter to abide are pains and wounds—cherished in heaven are the sufferings of martyred innocence!—how then does every pain of Jesus awaken the pain of conscious guilt in my mind!—how does every wound reveal a deeper wound in my soul! I will repent me now, if I never would before. I will resist—I can resist no longer. I will be crucified to sin, and sin shall be crucified to me. I will bathe the cross of Jesus with the tears of penitence. God, who hast interposed for me, help me to die daily unto sin, and to live unto righteousness.

It is in this connexion, if anywhere, that we must give a few moments' attention to the doctrinal explanation of the atonement. I have indeed remonstrated against the speculative use of this subject, but the state of the public mind makes it necessary, perhaps, that something should be said of the theory of the atonement.

I understand this, then, to be the state of the question. Two leading views of the sacrifice of Christ divide the Christian world. The one regards it as an expedient; the other as a manifestation. According to the first view, the sacrifice of Christ is usually represented either as the suffering of a penalty, or as the payment of a debt, or as the satisfaction of a law. It is something that either turns God's favour towards us, or makes it proper for him to show favour. It is some new element, or some new expedient introduced into the divine government, without which it is impossible to obtain forgiveness. This, I understand to be, in general and in substance, the Calvinistic view. The other view regards the suffering of Christ, as simply a manifestation. It is not a purchase or procurement, but a manifestation of God's love and pity and willingness to forgive. It is not the enfranchisement from some legal bond of God's mercy, but the expression, the out-flowing of that mercy which was for ever free. It was a satisfaction not to the heart of reluctant justice, but of abounding grace. The divine displeasure against sin, indeed, was manifested; for how costly was the sacrifice for its removal; but not a displeasure that must burn against the sinner till some expedient was found to avert it.

Now the view of manifestation is the one which we adopt; and certainly many of the more modern Orthodox explanations come to the same thing. They still proceed, it is true, upon the presumption that this manifestation was intrinsically necessary—that sin could not have been forgiven without it; that the authority of God's law could not have been otherwise upholden. I certainly cannot take this view of the subject. I cannot undertake to say what it was possible or proper for the Almighty to do. I can only wonder at the presumption of those, who do profess thus to penetrate into the fathomless counsels of the Infinite Government. I read in the Gospel, it is true, of a necessity for the sufferings of Christ: but I understand it to be founded in prophecy, which must be fulfilled—founded in the moral purposes of his mission—founded in the wisdom of God. I read, that God is the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus—of him that is penitent and regenerate; that is, God treats him as if he were just—in other words, shows favour to him; bestows pardon and mercy upon him.

And of this mercy Jesus, the sufferer, is the great and all-subduing manifestation.

I cannot here go into the details of interpretation. It is perplexed by reasonings of the Apostles about the relations of Jews and Gentiles, by analogies to the Jewish sacrifices, by the language and speculations of an ancient time; by difficulties, in short, that require much study and learning for their clearing up, and demand *no* solution at the hand of plain and unlearned persons, who are simply seeking for their salvation. This profound criticism, in short, is a subject for a volume, rather than for a sermon.

But I will present to you, in accordance with a frequent practice of theologians, a single illustration, which if you will carry into the New Testament, you will see, I believe, that it explains most of the language you will find there.

Suppose, then, that a father, in a distant part of the country, had a family of sons, all dear to him. Suppose that all of them, save one, who remained at home with him, had wandered away into the world to seek their fortunes, and that, in the prosecution of that design, they had come to one of our cities. Suppose that, in process of time, they yield to the temptations that surround them, and become dissolute and abandoned, and are sunk into utter misery—first one, and then another, till all are fallen. From time to time, dark and vague rumours had gone back to their country home, that all was not well; and their parent had been anxious and troubled. He thought of it in sleepless nights; but what could he do? He desired one and another of his neighbours, going down to the great city, to see his sons, and tell him of their estate. On their return, they speak to him in those reserved and doubtful terms, that sear a parent's heart; one messenger after another speaks in this manner; till at length evasion is no longer possible, and the father learns the dreadful truth, that his sons are sunk into the depths of vice, debasement, and wretchedness. Then, at last, he says to his only remaining, and beloved son, "Go and save thy brethren." Let me observe to you here, that nothing is more common in the books of Divinity, than comparisons of this nature; and that it is not, of course, designed to imply anything in such comparisons of the relative rank of the parties. The father says, "Go and save thy brethren." Moved by compassion, that son comes to the great city. He seeks his unhappy brethren in their miserable haunts; he labours for their recovery. Ere long, a fearful pestilence spreads itself in the city. Shall the heroic brother desist from his task? No; he labours on; night and day he labours; till, in the noisome abodes of vice, poverty, and misery, he takes the infectious disease, and dies. He dies for the salvation of his brethren.

Now what is the language of this sacrifice on the part of the father, what is it on the part of the son, and what is it to those unhappy objects of this interposition?

On the part of the father, it was unspeakable compassion. It was also, constructively, an expression of his displeasure against vice—of the sense he entertained of the evil into which his sons had fallen. On the part of the son, it was a like conviction and compassion, and a willingness to die for the recovery of his brethren. What would it be to those guilty brethren? What would it be especially, if by dying for

them, he recovered them to virtue, restored them t their father's arms, and to a happy life? "Ah! our brother," they would say, "he died for us—he died that we might live. His blood has cleansed us from sin. By his stripes, by his groans, by his pains, we are healed. Dearly beloved brother! we will live in memory of thy virtues, and in honour of thy noble sacrifice." Nor, my friends, is there one word of reliance or gratitude in the New Testament applied to the sacrifice of Jesus, which persons thus circumstanced, and with a Jewish education, would not apply to just such an interposition as we have supposed. If, then, we have put a case which meets and satisfies all the Scriptural language to be explained, have we not put a case that embraces the essential features of the great atonement?

II. I have now spoken of the relation of the cross of Christ to our sins, and to the pardon of sin. But we should by no means have exhausted its efficacy, we should by no means have shown all the reasons of its pre-eminence in the Christian dispensation, if we were to stop here. Not less practical, not less momentous is its relation to our deliverance from sin. That, indeed, is its ultimate end, and pardon is to be obtained only on that condition. This idea, indeed, has been essentially involved in what we have already said; but it requires yet further to be unfolded.

The death of Jesus is the greatest ministration ever known on earth to human virtue. It was intended not to be a relief to the conscience, but an incentive—a goad to the negligent conscience.

It was not meant, because Christ has died, that men should roll the burden of their sin on him, and be at ease; but that more than ever, they should struggle with it themselves. It was designed that the cross should lay a stronger bond upon the conscience, even than the law. When I look upon the cross, I cannot indulge, my brethren, in sentimental or theologic strains of rapture, over reliefs and escapes; over the broken bonds of legal obligation; over a salvation wrought out *for* me, and not *in* me; over a purchased and claimed pardon—as if now all were easy—as if a commutation were made with justice—the debt paid—the debtor free—and there were nothing to do, but to rejoice and triumph. No; I should feel it to be base and ungenerous in me, thus to contemplate sufferings and agonies endured for my salvation. The cross is a most majestic and touching revelation of solemn and bounden duty. It makes the bond stronger, not weaker. It reveals a harder, not an easier way to be saved. That is to say, it sets up a stricter, not a looser law for the conscience. Every particle of evil in the heart is now a more lamentable and gloomy burden, than it ever was before. The cross sets a darker stamp upon the malignity of sin, than the table of the commandments, and it demands of us, in accents louder than Sinai's thunder, sympathetic agonies to be freed from sin.

The cross, I repeat, is the grand ministration to human virtue. It is a language to all lonely and neglected, or slighted and persecuted virtue. Often do we stand in situations where that cross is our dearest example and friend. It is, perhaps, beneath the humble roof, where the great world passes us by, and neither sees nor knows us; where no one blazons our patience, our humility, cheerfulness and disinterestedness, to the multitude that is ever dazzled with outward splendour. There must we learn of him, who for us was a neglected wanderer, and had

not even where to lay his head. There must we learn of him, who was meek and lowly in heart, and find rest unto our souls. There must we learn of him, who bowed that meek and lowly head upon the cross—dishonoured before a passing multitude, honoured before all ages. Or we stand, perhaps, beneath the perilous eye of observation—of an observation not friendly, but hostile and scornful. We stand up for our integrity: we stand for some despised and persecuted principle in religion, or morals, or science. And it is hard to bear opprobrium and injury for this;—hard, for the noblest testimony of our conscience, to bear the worst infliction of human displeasure. The dissenting physician, the dissenting philanthropist, the dissenting Christian, knows full well how hard it is. And there—keeping there our firm stand—must we look upon that cross, whereon hung one who was despised and rejected of men—the scorned of earth, the favoured and beloved of heaven. That stand for conscience, kept firmly, humbly, meekly, we must learn, is not mean and low; it is the very grandeur of life; it is the magnificence of the world. It is a world of misconstruction, of injury, of persecution: that cross is lifted up to stay our fainting courage, to fix our wavering fidelity, to inspire us with meekness, patience, forgiveness of enemies, and trust in God.

Again, the cross is a language to *all* tempted and struggling virtue. Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. Thou too art tempted. In high estate as well as in low, thou art tempted. Nay, and the misery and peril of the case is, that all estates are becoming low with thee; all is sinking around thee, when temptation presses thee sore. When thou art tempted to swerve from the integrity of thy spirit or of thy life, and the perilous hour draws near, and thou reasonest with thyself, thou art in a kind of despair. Thou sayest that friends desert thee, and the world looks coldly on thee; or thou sayest that thy passions are strong, and thy soul is sad, and thy state is unhappy, and it is no matter what befalls. Then it is, that to thy tempted and discouraged virtue Jesus speaks, and says, deny the evil thought, and take up thy cross and follow me. Behold my agony, behold my desertion, behold the drops of bloody sweat; I shrink in the frailty of nature, as thou dost, from the cup of bitterness, I pray that it may pass from me; but I do not refuse it. There is worse to fear than pain—*guilt*—failure in the great trial—the prostration of all thy nobleness before the base appliance of a moment's gratification—ay, the pain of all thy after life, for an hour's pleasure. Learn of me, that virtue does not always repose on a bed of roses. Oh! no; sharp pangs—sharp nails—piercing thorns, are for me; wonder not thou, then, at the fiery trial in thy soul; my sufferings emblem thine, so let my triumph: all can be endured for victory—holy victory—immortal victory.

Once more; the cross appeals to all heroic and lofty virtue. Let me say heroic; though that word is scarcely yet found in the Christian's vocabulary. But in the Christian's life there is to be a heroism. He is to feel as one who has undertaken a lofty enterprise. He has entered upon a sublime work. It is his being's task, and trial, and triumph. We think too poorly of what a Christian life is. We hold it to be too commonplace. There is nothing heroic or lofty, as to the principle, in all history, in all the majestic fortunes of humanity, but is to come into the silent strife of every Christian's spirit.

Now to this, the example of the crucified Saviour is an emphatic appeal. The cross is commonly represented as humbling to the human heart; it is so to the worldly pride of the human heart; but it is also to that heart, an animating, soul-thrilling, ennobling call. It speaks to all that is sacred, disinterested, self-sacrificing in humanity. I fear that we regard Christ's sacrifice for us so technically, that we rob it of its vital import. It *was* a painful sacrifice for us, as truly as if our brother had died for us; it was a bitter and bloody propitiation, to bring back offending man to his God; it was a groan for human guilt and misery that rent the earth; it was a death endured for us, that we might live—and live for ever. I speak not one word of this technically; I speak vital truth. Even if Jesus had died as any other martyr dies; if he had thought of nothing but his own fidelity—had thought of nothing, but bearing witness to the truth; still the call would, *by inference*, have come to us. But it is not left to inference. Jesus was commissioned to bear this very relation to the world. He knew that if he were lifted up, he should draw all men to him. And how draw all men to him? Plainly, in sympathy, in imitation, in love. He designed to speak to all ages, to touch all the high and solemn aspirations of unnumbered millions of souls; to win the world to the noble spirit of self-sacrifice; to disinterestedness, and fortitude, and patience; to meekness, and candour, and gentleness, and forgiveness of injuries. This is the heroism of Christianity. In these virtues centres all true glory. This did Jesus mean to illustrate. His purpose was, to turn off the eyes of men from the power, pride, ambition, and splendour of the world, to the true grandeur, dignity, and all-sufficing good of love, meekness, and disinterestedness. And how surely have his purposes and predictions been accomplished! A renovating power has gone forth from him upon the face of the whole civilized world, and is fast spreading itself to the ends of the earth. And one emphatic proof of this is, that the cross, before, the stigma of the vilest crimes, has become the emblem of all spiritual greatness.

At the risk of wearying your patience, my brethren, let me invite you to a brief consideration of one other relation of the cross of Christ; I mean its relation to human happiness. It shall be a closing and a brief one.

Jesus was a sufferer: and yet so filled was his mind with serenity and joy, that the single instance, in which we read that he wept, seems to open to us a new light upon his character. Jesus was a patient, cheerful, triumphant sufferer. The interest, which in this light his character possesses for the whole human race, has never, it appears to me, been sufficiently illustrated.

We are all sufferers. At one time or another, in one way or another, we all meet this fate of humanity. So true is this, and so well do we know it to be true, that it would be only too painful to open the wide volume of proofs which life is continually furnishing. It is really necessary to lay restraint upon our thoughts, when speaking of the pains and afflictions of life. I know it is often said, that the pulpit is not sufficiently exciting. But how easy were it to make it more so! A thoughtful man will often feel, that instead of cautiously and considerately touching the human heart, he might go into that heart, with swords and knives, to cut, to wound, and almost to slay it, if such were

his pleasure. What if he were to describe suffering infancy, or a sick and dying child, or the agony of parental sorrow, or manhood in its strength, or matronage in its beauty, broken down under some infliction, touching the mind or the body, to more than infant weakness—who could bear it? Yes; it is the lot of humanity to suffer. No condition, no guarded palace, no golden shield, can keep out the shafts of calamity. And especially it is the lot of intellectual life to suffer. As man becomes properly man; as his mind grapples with its ordained probation, the dispensation naturally presses harder upon him. The face of careless childhood may be arrayed with perpetual smiles; but behold, how the brow of manhood, and the matronly brow, grows serious and thoughtful, as years steal on; how the cheek grows pale, and what a meaning is set in the depths of many an eye around you—all proclaiming histories, long histories, of care, and anxiety, and disappointment, and affliction.

Now into this overshadowed world, One has come, to commune with suffering—to soothe, to relieve, to conquer it: himself a sufferer—himself acquainted with grief—himself the conqueror of pain—himself made perfect through sufferings; and teaching us to gain like virtue and victory. For in all this, I see him ever calm, patient, cheerful, triumphant.

And what a touching aspect does all this strong and calm endurance lend to his afflictions. For he *was* afflicted, and his soul was sometimes "sorrowful, even unto death." When I read, that at the grave of Lazarus, "Jesus wept;" when I hear him say, in the garden of Gethsemane, "Father, if it be possible, remove this cup from me;" when from the cross arose that piercing cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me:" I know that he suffered. I know that loneliness, and desertion, and darkness were upon his path; I feel that sorrow and fear sometimes touched, with a passing shade, that seraphic countenance.

But oh! how divinely does he rise above all! What a peculiarity was there in the character of this wonderful Being; the rejected, the scorned, the scourged, the crucified: and yet no being was ever so considerate towards the faults of his friends, as he was towards the hostility of his very enemies; no being was ever so kindly and compassionate in spirit, so habitually even and cheerful in temper; so generous and gracious in manner. I cannot express the sense I have of his equanimity, of his gentleness, of the untouched beauty and sweetness of his philanthropy, of the unapproached greatness of his magnanimity and fortitude. He looked through this life, with a spiritual eye, and saw the wise intent and beneficent effect of suffering; he looked up with confiding faith to a Father in heaven; he looked through the long and blessed ages beyond this life; and earth, with all its scenes and sorrows, shrunk to a point, amidst the all-surrounding infinity of truth, and goodness, and heaven.

Thus, my brethren, has he taught us how to suffer. He has resolved that dark problem of life; how that suffering, in the long account, may be better than ease; and poverty, better than riches; and desertion, better than patronage; and mortification better than applause; and disappointment better than success; and martyrdom better than all the honours of a sinful life; and how, therefore, that suffering is to be met

with a brave and manly heart, with a sustaining faith, with a cheerful courage—counting it all joy, and making it all triumph.

Thus have I attempted—and I feel that I ought not to detain you longer—I have attempted, however imperfectly, to unfold the intent for which Jesus suffered; to unfold the import and teaching of the cross of Christ to human guilt, to human virtue, and to human happiness. May you know more of the truth as it is in Jesus, than words can utter, or worldly heart conceive! And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you always. Amen.

CURSORY OBSERVATIONS.

NO. IV.—ON THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM.

The celebrated *five points* of Calvinism are the following:—total depravity, election, particular redemption, irresistible grace, and the final perseverence of saints. It has been justly observed, that "the two first only are fundamental doctrines—the three last necessary consequences." The consequences, however, are none the less liable to their separate and particular objections. But as I propose to confine myself to questions at *issue* between Orthodox and Liberal Christians, I shall not think it necessary to offer anything more than a passing remark or two, on the doctrines of particular redemption, and the saints' perseverance.

Particular redemption, or the limitation of the atonement, both in its design and efficacy, *to the elect*, is a doctrine which has long since been discarded by the Congregationalists of this country. Indeed, these churches are about as improperly called *Calvinistic*, as they are, in common parlance among the mass of our people, denominated Presbyterian. It is worth while to remark, though it be only for the sake of correcting a verbal inaccuracy, that there are not above a dozen or twenty *Presbyterian* churches in all New England; the word Presbyterian properly standing for a form of church government, not for a faith. And it is more important to observe, for the sake of correcting an error in the minds of the people, that there is probably, in strictness of speech, *not one Calvinistic Church* in the ancient dominion of the Puritans. Every one of the *five points* has been essentially modified—has been changed from what it originally was.

But to return; the doctrine of particular redemption deserves to be noticed, as an instance of that attempt at *mathematical precision*, which, as I think, is a distinguishing trait of Calvinism, and which has done so much harm to the theological speculations of this country. I shall have occasion to refer to this kind of reasoning again. In the instance before us, it appears in the following statement. Sinners, it was said, had incurred a debt to divine justice; they owed a certain amount of suffering. Jesus Christ undertook, in behalf of the elect, to pay this debt. Now, if he had suffered more,—paid more, than was necessary to satisfy this particular demand, there would have been a waste of suffering, a waste of this transferable merit. But there *was* no such waste; the suffering exactly met the demand; and therefore the redemption was *particular;* it was limited to the elect—no others could be saved, without *another* atonement. This was, once, *theological reasoning!* And to dispute it, was held to be intolerable presumption. Such presumption severed, for a time, the New England churches from their

southern brethren. Such a dispute, with one or two others like it, came near to rending the Presbyterian Church asunder.*

Let us now say a word, on the doctrine of *the saints' perseverance.* If you separate from this the idea of an irresistible grace, impelling, and, as it were, compelling Christians to persevere in piety and virtue, there is little, perhaps, to object to it. It *is* so separated in the *present* Orthodox belief, and therefore, it is scarcely a question in controversy. We all believe, that a man, who has become once thoroughly and heartily interested in the true Gospel, doctrine, character, and glory of Jesus Christ, is *very* likely to persevere and grow in that interest. I confess, that my own conviction on this point is very strong, and scarcely falls short of any language in which the doctrine of perseverance is declared. I can hardly conceive, how a man, who has once fully opened his eyes upon that "Light," should ever be willing to close them. And I believe, that in proportion as the Gospel is understood and felt—felt in all its deep fountains of peace and consolation, understood in all its yet coming revelations and unfoldings of purity and moral beauty—that in proportion to this, the instances of "falling away," whether into infidelity or worldliness, will be more and more rare. I am aware, however, and think it ought to be said, that the common statements of the doctrine of perseverance are dangerous to the unreflecting and to the speculative. The truth is, that we ought to have nothing to do with perseverance as a doctrine, and everything with it, as a fact. Good men shall persevere—good Christians, above all, shall persevere; but let them remember that they can do so, only by constant watchfulness, endeavour, self-denial, prayer, fidelity.

I shall now take up the more important subjects named at the head of this article.

The first is *total depravity*, including, of course, the position that this depravity is *native.*

I shall say nothing, in the few brief hints I have now to offer, of the practical views, which we all ought deeply to consider, of the *actual depravity* of man. I am concerned at present, then, only with the speculative and abstract doctrine of native, total depravity. And I am anxious, in the first place, to state it, in such a manner, as shall be unexceptionable to its most scrupulous advocate. It is not, then, according to modern explanations, that man is unable to be good; or that he is as bad as he can be; or that his natural appetites, sympathies, and instincts are originally bad. I have known the distinction to be put in this way; that man is totally depraved, in the *theological sense* of those words, but not in the common and classical sense of them, as they are used in our English literature, and in ordinary conversation:—a very good distinction, but a very bad precedent and principle for all fair reasoning. For if men are allowed to apply to common words this secret, technical, theological meaning, their speculations can neither be understood, nor met, nor subjected to the laws of common sense. It is not safe in moral reasonings, to admit two kinds of depravity, or two kinds of goodness. Men will be too ready to find out, that it is easier to be good, according to one theory of goodness, than according to

* At length they have severed it; and we have two General Assemblies contending for precedence before the Civil Courts.

another. And, it has too often come to pass, that *regenerated* and *sanctified* (the theological words), have not meant, pure, humble, amiable, and virtuous. And so, on the other hand, a man may much more easily and calmly admit that he is depraved, in the theological, than in the common sense. And in making this distinction, he deprives himself of one of the most powerful means of conviction. There is a great deal of truth in that *theory* of moral sentiments, though it does not go to the bottom of the subject, which maintains that a man learns to condemn and reproach himself, *through sympathy* with that feeling of *others*, which condemns and reproaches him. But of this, by his peculiar and secret idea of depravity, the reasoner in question deprives himself. And hence it is, that such a man can talk loudly and extravagantly of his own depravity. It is because he does not use that word in the ordinary sense, nor feel the reproach that attaches to it. It is hence that congregations can calmly and indifferently listen to those charges of utter depravity, which, if received in their *common* acceptation, would set them on fire with resentment.

But the distinction does not much tend, after all, to help the matter, as a doctrine, though it does tend so nearly to neutralize it as a conviction; because, it is still contended, that the theological sense is the true sense. When the advocate of this doctrine says, that men are utterly depraved, he means that they are so, in the only true, in the highest sense of those words. And when he says, that this depravity is native, he means to fix the charge, not, indeed, upon the *whole* nature of man, not upon his original appetites and sympathies, but upon his highest, his *moral* nature. He means to say, that his moral nature—and nothing else, strictly speaking, *can* be sinful or holy—that his *moral* nature produces nothing but sin; that all which *can* sin in man *does* sin, and does nothing *but* sin, so long as it follows that tendency which is originally communicated to his nature. He means to say, that sin is as truly and certainly the fruit of his moral nature, as *thought* is the fruit of his *mental* nature. And it makes no difference to say that he sins freely, for it is just as true that he thinks freely. In fact, he is not free to *cease* from doing either. In this view, indeed, depravity comes nothing short of an absolute inability to be holy. For if the moral constitution of man is so formed, as naturally to produce nothing but sin, I see not how he can any more help sinning than he can help thinking. I do not forget that it is *said*, that man *has* the moral power to be holy; for I am glad to admit any modification in the statement of the doctrine. But, in fact, what does it amount to? What is a moral power to be good, but a *disposition* to be so? And if no such disposition is allowed to belong to human nature, I see not in what intelligible sense any *power* can belong to it.*

I will not pursue this definition of human depravity farther into those metaphysical distinctions and subtilties, to which it would lead. But I would now ask the reader, as a matter of argument, whether he can

* I believe that this is still the prevailing view of human depravity: but I should not omit, perhaps, to notice that, since these essays were written, another modification of the doctrine has been proposed. It is, that sin is not the necessary result of man's moral constitution, but the invariable result of his moral condition. There is little to choose. In either case, sin, and sin only, is inevitably bound up with human existence.

believe, that the simple and practical teachers of our religion ever thought of settling any of these nice and abstruse questions? For it is not enough for Orthodox believers on this point, that we admit the Scripture writers to have represented human depravity as exceedingly great and lamentable; *that* they undoubtedly did; but the Orthodox interpreter insists, that they meant to represent it, with metaphysical exactness, as *native* and *total*. He insists, that they meant *just so much*. That they meant a great deal, I repeat, is unquestionable; that they used phraseology of a strong and unlimited character, is admitted; but to draw from writings, so marked with solemn earnestness and feeling, certain precise and metaphysical truths—to extract dogmas from the bold and heart-burning denunciations of prophets—to lay hold of weapons of controversy in the sorrowful and indignant reproaches of those who wept over human wickedness, seems to me preposterous. Surely, if any one of us were speaking of some very iniquitous practice, of some abominable traffic, or of some city or country whose wickedness cried to heaven, we should speak strongly, we should exhaust our language of its strongest epithets; it would be perfectly natural to do so: but, *as* surely, the last thing we should think of, would be that of laying down a doctrine: the last thing we should think of, would be that of philosophizing, and propounding theoretic dogmas upon the nature of the soul! And, to make the case parallel, I may add, that we should by no means think of charging every or any individual, in such a country, or city, or company, with *total* and *native* depravity. I know there will be some to say, but they will not be the really intelligent and thinking, that *our* language and *Scripture* language are different things. Let them be different in as many respects as any one pleases; but they must not be different in this. *All language is to be interpreted by the same general principles.* He who does not admit this, has not taken the first step in true theology, and is not to be disputed with on this ground; but must be carried back to consider "what be the first principles" applicable to such inquiries.

As a matter of argument, *out* of the Scriptures, I will ask but one further question, and then leave the subject. I ask the Calvinist to say, from what source he originally derived his *ideas of moral qualities* —whence he obtained his *conceptions* of goodness, holiness, &c. I am certain, that neither he nor any man has obtained these *conceptions* of moral qualities from anything but the *experience* of them. A man could no more conceive of goodness, without having felt it, at some moment, and to some extent, than he could have an idea of colours, without seeing them. No description, no reasoning, no comparison could inform him either of the one or the other. A man does not approve of what is right, by *any reasoning*—whether upon utility, or the fitness of things, or upon anything else—but by simple consciousness. This is the doctrine of our most approved moral philosophers. But, consciousness of what? Of the qualities approved, plainly. A man must *have* a right affection before he can approve it—before he can know anything about it. Does not this settle the question? A *totally* and *natively* depraved being could have no idea of rectitude or holiness, and by consequence, no idea of the moral character of God. And it has, therefore, been rightly argued, by some who have held the doctrine we are discussing, that men naturally have no such ideas. But I will

not suppose that this is a position to be contended against; since it would follow, that men are commanded, on peril and pain of all future woes, to love a holiness and a moral perfection of God, which they are not merely unable to love, but of which, according to the supposition, they have no conception!

The two remaining points to be considered are *election* and *irresistible grace*, or the divine influence on the mind. I take these together, because I have one principle of scriptural interpretation to advance, which is applicable to them both. And as I do not remember to have seen it brought forward, in discussions of this nature, and as it seems to me an unquestionably just principle, I shall take up some space to explain it.

It must be admitted, that very strong and pointed language is used in the New Testament, concerning election, and God's spirit or influence in the human heart. And I think it is apparent that the Arminian opposers of these doctrines have betrayed a consciousness that they had considerable difficulties to contend with. They have seemed to be aware that the language of Scripture, which their Calvinistic adversaries quote, is strong, and they have shown some disposition to lessen its force, or to turn it into vague and general applications. Now, for my own part, I find no difficulty in admitting the whole force and personal bearing of these representations, though I cannot receive them in the form which Calvinism has given them. And I make this exception, too, not because I am opposed to the strength and directness of the Calvinistic belief, but because I am opposed, in this, as in other respects, to the metaphysical and moral principles of the system. In short, I believe in personal election, and the influence of the Almighty Spirit on the mind: and this, or what amounts to this, I suspect all Christians believe. For, an "election of communities," as some interpret it, is still an election of the individuals that compose them. And an "election to privileges," as others prefer to consider it, is still making a distinction, and a distinction on which salvation depends. If it be said that an "election to privileges" saves the doctrine of human freedom; so, I answer, must any election save the doctrine of human freedom, but that of the fatalist. And the same may be said of divine influence.

Let us, then, go to the proposed principle of interpretation, which, I confess, relieves my own mind, and I hope it may other minds.

I say, then, that *the apostles wrote for their subject.* It is a well established principle among the learned, though too little applied, that the apostles wrote for their age — with particular reference, that is, to the circumstances of their own times. I now maintain, in addition to this, *that they wrote for their subject.* Their subject, their exclusive subject, was religion; and the principles of the divine government, which they apply to *this* subject, may be equally applicable to everything else. Their *not saying*, that these principles have such an application, does not prove that they have not; because they wrote for their subject, and it was not their business to say so. In other words, God's government is infinite; and they speak but of one department of it. His foreknowledge and his influence are unbounded; they speak of this foreknowledge and influence, but in one single respect. But instead of limiting the application of their principles to this one department, and this one respect, the inference would rather be, that they are to be extended to everything. And in fact this extension of the principle, with regard to

election (in one instance, and I believe only one), *is* hinted at, where the apostle says, that Christians are "predestinated according to the purpose of him, *who worketh all things—after the counsel of his own will.*" If this be true, then, *everything* is a matter of divine counsel; *everything* is disposed of by election. And men are as much elected to be philosophers, merchants, or inhabitants of this country or that country, as they are elected to be Christians. If this is election, I believe there will be found no difficulty in it,—save what exists in that inscrutableness of the subject, which must forbid our expecting ever to fathom it.

It will be apparent from this view, in what I differ from Calvinists. They make that foreknowledge and purpose of God, which relate to the religious *characters of men*, a peculiarity in the divine government. Connecting the doctrine of election, as they do, with that of special grace, they leave an impression unfavourable to human exertion, and to the divine impartiality. But I maintain, without denying the general difficulties of the subject, that the religious part of the character is no more the result of the divine prescience and purpose, than any other part; and we have no more reason to perplex ourselves with this department of the divine government than with any other.

Our principle admits of a fuller illustration on the subject of *divine influence*. I say that the apostles wrote for their subject, and wrote so exclusively for it, that no inference is to be raised, from their *silence*, against applying their principles to other subjects. And I will present an illustration of this argument, to which no one, who respects the authority of Scripture, can object. Look, then, at the inspired writers of old. Writing, as they did, under a long established form and dispensation of religion, they took a freer and wider range of subjects. And thus they extended the doctrine of divine influence to everything. They applied it much more frequently to outward things, than to the mind; and much more frequently to the common business of life, than to religion. Nay, they asserted the necessity of this influence, in the common affairs of life, as strongly as the New Testament writers do, in the spiritual concerns of religion. They as much, and as strongly asserted, that men *could not succeed*, in business, or in study, in agriculture, in the mechanic arts, or in seeking after knowledge, without God's aid and influence, as our Christian teachers assert, that men cannot grow in grace and piety, without that aid and influence. But, now, observe how different was the situation of the New Testament writers. They had no leisure, if I may speak so, to turn aside to the common affairs of life. They were obliged to put forth every energy for the propagation and defence of a new faith. They had no time, for instance, to prepare general and abstract pieces of devotion, as many of the Psalms are; or books of maxims and apothegms, like the Proverbs; or highly-wrought moral dialogues, like the Book of Job. They had no time to descant on matters of speculative morality, the prudence of life, and the diversified ways of Providence. Religion—religion, as a matter of evidence and experience, was the great engrossing theme. And hence they have spoken of that divine influence and superintendence, which really extend to all things—they have spoken of them, I say, especially and chiefly *in relation to religion*. But it would be as unjustifiable and unsafe, from this circumstance, to limit the doctrine of divine influence to religious

matters, as it would be, from consulting the *ancient* records, to limit it to outward nature, and the common affairs of life. The only safe rule, whether in reasoning, or for devotion, is to extend it to all things.

In all this I am aware that I am asserting nothing that is new. I am only attempting to free the subject from those difficulties, that have arisen from the *peculiarity* of the New Testament communications. I repeat it, that, in the principles, there is nothing new or peculiar. All good Christians have believed, and must believe, that the wise counsel and holy providence of God extend to everything. We must all believe, in some sense, in *election* and *divine influence*. But we have very unreasonably suffered ourselves to be perplexed with the speculative difficulties of this subject. We have gone beyond our depth, and have lost our standing. How can we expect to fathom the infinite counsel and providence of Heaven!

But the principal difficulty and danger to most minds, I suspect, have arisen from their attaching too much *peculiarity* to the counsel and influence of the Almighty, in the matters of religion. They have said, "If I am elected, I shall certainly be saved; and if I am not, it is in vain for me to try. And if God's spirit works within me the work of faith, I have nothing to do myself." Now, let them extend their views of this subject;—and they will be safe, and ought to be satisfied. But, at any rate, they will be safe. They will be effectually guarded from the abuse of these doctrines. For as no one will expect to be a physician, or a philosopher, without study, because he hopes or imagines that he is fore-ordained, or will be supernaturally assisted, to gain eminence in these professions, so neither will any similar hope of being a Christian, and being saved, lessen the exertions that are suitable to that end. With these views of the doctrines in question, *common sense* may be trusted to guard them from perversion.

I said that the danger was of attaching *too much* peculiarity to that counsel and influence of God, which are connected with our salvation. Nevertheless, *something* of this nature, I apprehend, *is* to be ascribed to them. I distrust single views of subjects. It arises, I believe, from the imperfection and weakness of our minds, that our whole mental vision is apt to be engrossed with seeing a truth in one point of light. Separate views must be combined, to form a just and well-proportioned faith. This, above all things, is liable to be forgotten amidst the biasses of controversy. We may take the larger view of the subjects before us, and yet we may admit that God does especially interpose in behalf of religious beings, weak and tempted as we are. And we may admit, that it has especially pleased him—that it is a counsel most agreeable to his nature, to bring good out of evil, to bring good men out of this world of temptations. I believe both. It does not perplex nor disturb me, but it calms and it comforts me, to believe that the good and merciful Spirit of God is all around me, and can interpose for me and assist me, in my times of trouble, and temptation, and peril. And it does not pain me, but it imparts satisfaction to my mind to believe, that the counsel, which has designed the highest good to its obedient offspring, is an eternal counsel!

If, now, on the whole, it be said that these views, which have been offered, lessen the importance, or the reality of God's counsel and providence, we maintain, on the contrary, that they assert them in the

highest degree; that they carry them into all things, and thus directly lead to devotion; that they serve, therefore, the grandest purpose of religious instruction, by bringing God, in his power and his mercy, near to us—by impressing a sense of our dependence on him, and our unspeakable obligations to him, at every moment, and every step—for every attainment and blessing of life. This is the religious frame of spirit that we most need to gain—to feel, that God is near to us—that he upholds and blesses us; that he is near to us always; that all things are filled with his presence; that the universe around us is not so much a standing monument, as a living expression of his goodness; that all which we enjoy is not so much benevolence, sending down its gifts from afar to us, as it is the energy of his love working within us.

This, then, is the practical result of our reflections—that God is all in all; that his ever-living mercy, and his ever-working power pervade all things; that they are in all height and in all depth, in what is vast and what is minute, in the floating atom, and the rolling world, in the fall of a sparrow to the ground, and in the great system of the universe—in the insect's life, and in the soaring spirit of the archangel.

It is in Him, that each of us lives, and moves, and has his being. If we have gained any blessings of life, and if we have made any acquisition of knowledge, it is from him. And especially, if we have made any attainments in piety; if we are learning the great lesson of life, and that which prepares us for another and a better; if we are learning to be devout and pure in heart—to be affectionate, and forbearing, and patient, and penitent, and forgiving; if the dew of a heavenly influence is descending upon us, and the fruits of virtue and goodness are springing up within us; if the universe is ministering to our devotion—if religion, with every kind and gracious power, has visited us, and has become our friend, and guide, and comforter—the employment, and happiness, and end of our being—Oh! this is an emanation from the Divinity—a beam of heaven's own light—an expression of God's mercy, that demands our highest and tenderest gratitude. Thus, if we would come to the great practical result of all religious truth, let us be convinced, and feel, that "God is all in all." "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things;—and to him—to him who made us, and blesses us, and guides us to heaven—to HIM be glory for ever and ever."

CURSORY OBSERVATIONS.

NO. V.—ON FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

I have hesitated about introducing this subject, in the present course of observations, because there is no question upon it that does, accurately speaking, divide Orthodox and Liberal Christians. The great question, about the duration of future punishment, has been brought very little into debate between the parties, and it has no particular connexion with any of the speculative questions that *are* in debate. If Universalism, considered as a denial of all future punishment, has more affinity with any one theological system than another, it undoubtedly is Calvinism; and it is a well known fact, that it originally sprung from Calvinism, and existed in the closest connexion with it.

Still, however, since it is latterly urged, by the Orthodox, that there is a great difference between them and their opponents, on this subject, and since, as I apprehend, a difference does exist in their general views and speculations, and one that deserves to be discussed, I have thought proper to bring it into the course of my remarks.

As the subject has been very little discussed among us, I shall treat it, not so much in the form of controversy, as with that calm and dispassionate disquisition, which more properly belongs to a theme so solemn and weighty.

I. The retribution of guilt is serious in the contemplation, and must be severe in the endurance. *The penal suffering of a guilty mind, wherever, and whenever it comes, must be great.* This, to me, is the first and clearest of all truths, with regard to the punishment of sin. Even experience teaches us this; and Scripture, with many words of awful warning, confirms the darkest admonitions of experience. If sin is not repented of, in this life, then its punishment must take place in a future world.

Of the miseries of that future state, I do not need the idea of a direct infliction from God, to give me a fearful impression. Of all the unveiled horrors of that world nothing seems so terrific, as the self-inflicted torture of a guilty conscience. It will be enough to fill the measure of his woe, that the sinner shall be left to himself—that he shall be left to the natural consequences of his wickedness. In the universe, there are no agents to work out the misery of the soul like its own fell passions; not the fire, the darkness, the flood, or the tempest. Nothing, within the range of our conceptions, can equal the dread silence of conscience, the calm desperation of remorse, the corroding of ungratified desire, the gnawing worm of envy, the bitter cup of disappointment, the blighting curse of hatred. These, pushed to their extremity, may be enough to destroy the soul—as lesser sufferings, in this world, are sometimes found to destroy the reason.

But whatever that future calamity will be, I believe it is the highest idea we can form of it, to suppose that it is of the sinner's own procuring; that the burden of his transgressions will fall upon him, by its own weight; not be hurled upon him, as a thunder-bolt from heaven. If we should suppose a wicked man to live always on earth, and to proceed in his career of iniquity, adding sin to sin, arming conscience with new terrors, gathering and enhancing all horrible diseases and distempers, and increasing and accumulating the load of infamy and woe—this might give us some faint idea of the extent to which sin may go in another world.

This, then, is not a subject to be treated lightly, or with any heat or passion; but should be taken home to the most solemn contemplations and deep solicitude of every accountable being.

II. My second remark is, that the scriptural representations of future punishment *are not literal nor definite.*

That they are not literal is manifest from the consideration, that they are totally inconsistent, if taken literally. If there is a lake of fire, there cannot be a gnawing worm. If it is blackness or darkness, it cannot be a flaming deluge of fire. If it is death and destruction, literally, it cannot be sensible pain. If it is the loss of the soul, it cannot be the suffering of the soul. And yet all these representations are used to describe the future misery. It is plain, therefore, that all cannot be literally true. To suppose them literal, indeed, would be to make the future world like the present; for they are all drawn from present objects. Neither are these representations definite. It is not a definite idea, but "a certain fearful looking-for of judgment," that is given to us, in the present state. We know nothing about the particular place, or the particular circumstances of a future punishment. If these things are not literally described, it follows, indeed, that they are not definitely. For, the moment these descriptions cease to be literal, they cease to furnish ideas of anything that is tangible—of anything that can belong to place or circumstances—of anything that has dimensions, shape, or elements. That is to say, they are figurative. They serve but to throw a deeper shadow over the dark abyss; and leave us, not to pry into it with curiosity, but to tremble with fear. Indeed, the very circumstance, that the *future woe is unknown*, is, in itself, a most awful and appalling circumstance. It may be, that the revelation of it comes to us in general and ambiguous terms, for this very purpose. There is really something more alarming in a certain fearful looking-for of judgment, than in the definite knowledge of it.

Neither, as I believe, are those terms, which describe the *duration* of future misery, definite. Indeed, why should they be more definite, than those which relate to place or circumstance? In passages where all else is figurative, and that in so very high a degree, why may it not be suspected that what relates to the time may be figurative? This suspicion, drawn from the connected phraseology, may derive additional strength from the subject, about which the language in question is employed. It is the future, the indefinite, the unknown state. Whatever stretches into the vast futurity, is to us eternal. We can grasp no thought of everlasting, but that it is indefinite. You may bring this argument home to your own feelings, if you suppose that you had been called to describe some future and awful calamity, which was vast,

indefinite, unknown, terrible—if you consider whether you would not, with *these* views, have adopted phraseology as strong, as unlimited, as you find in the Scriptures on this subject. If, then, our idea of future punishment extends so far as to provide for the full strength of the language used—if our theory provide for the terms to be explained by it, is it not sufficient?—does it not go far enough?

To these considerations, relating to the language and the principles of interpretation that ought to be applied to it, let it be observed in addition, that the oriental style was habitually and very highly metaphorical, and is to be explained by the impression it would naturally make on those who were accustomed to it; and that even among us, with our cooler imaginations, the terms in question, such as "for ever," &c. are used figuratively—are applied to limited periods, and this on the most common occasions and subjects. To take one instance for all, as being the strongest of all: there is no higher or more unqualified description of the endurance of future misery, than that which says, "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Now it has been very plausibly argued thus—that "if ever the time comes when their worm shall die; if ever there shall be a quenching of the fire at all; then it is not true, that their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."* And the argument might be as conclusive as it is plausible, were it not for a single passage in the Old Testament, which applies the same language to a punishment confessedly temporary. It is the closing passage of Isaiah: "And they shall go forth"—that is, from Jerusalem, and probably to the valley of Jehoshaphat, where it is well known that carcases were thrown, and an almost perpetual fire kept to consume them—"And they shall go forth, and shall look upon the carcases of the men who have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh."

I shall only remark farther, upon the Scripture representations, that there is an ambiguity, a generality, a vastness, a terror about them, that seems fitted to check our confident reasonings. It is enough for us to fear. To speculate much, seems not our wisdom. Yet if we will speculate; if we can dispute on such a subject; if we can wrangle about texts and interpretations, and claim the full amount and force of every passage and statement, it may be well for us to be reminded, that we shall only confound ourselves, in our haste, and destroy the positions we take, in our eagerness to defend them. For if any one shall insist on the full force of those declarations, that denounce everlasting misery; his adversary may as fairly take his stand on the opposite texts, which declare that God *will have all men to be saved;* that Jesus came to destroy death; that death is swallowed up of life. Or if any one shall confine himself to the words eternal, unquenchable, &c. and will allow them no modification, I see not how he can fairly deny to his adversary the equal right of adhering to the representations of death, destruction, loss of the soul, or in other words, of annihilation, which are applied to the same subject. Nay, the latter will seem to have the advantage in the argument, for annihilation *is* an *everlasting* calamity. But not to dwell on this, the ambiguity mentioned, furnishes an answer to an im-

* Edwards.

portant objection to our views. It is said, if future misery is not literally eternal, what reason is there to think that future happiness is so?—for the same terms are brought to describe both. I answer that neither of them depend on general terms—that we are to look for our belief on all subjects to the scope and tenor of the sacred writings; and that, in particular, the promises of future happiness are all consistent, and leave no obscurity nor doubts. It is life, peace, rest; knowledge, perfection; glory, blessedness. But the threatenings of future evil are ambiguous, dark, obscure, and if taken literally, inconsistent. It is life, and death; being tormented, and being destroyed. It leaves therefore a vague but fearful impression. And such, it seems to me, were the Scriptures intended to leave, the impression of some vast and tremendous calamity, without precisely informing us what it is.

I cannot close this topic without offering one or two observations, independent of the scripture arguments, which seem to me of great weight.

There is one tremendous bearing of the doctrine of literally eternal punishment, the bare statement of which seems to me almost enough to decide the question. Take the instance of a child—who has just begun to be a moral agent; let the age be what it may—we need not now decide:—suppose that it has just come to the capacity of being sinful or holy; that it has possessed this capacity one hour or one day; that during this brief period, it has been selfish, passionate, unholy—a case not uncommon, I fear; that in short it has possessed, during this brief period of its probation, a character, which the gospel does not approve, which it condemns, which it threatens:—and can you believe that this child, in ignorance, in imbecility, in temptation; with passions unconsciously nurtured in the sleep of infancy, which are now breaking forth; with scarcely any force of reason to restrain them; with but a slight knowledge of God, with not a thought of futurity—that this child, the creature of weakness and ignorance, is actually, and in one single day, setting the seal to a misery that is eternal, and eternally increasing—to a misery which must therefore, in the event, infinitely surpass all that the world, in all the periods of its duration, has suffered or will suffer? Yet this is the doctrine—this is one essential form of the doctrine of literally eternal punishment; and if you cannot believe this, as I am persuaded if you feel the case you cannot, you cannot believe the doctrine at all, in any form.

There is another observation which seems to me equally conclusive. The doctrine, as it appears to me, destroys the natural proofs of the goodness of God. Let it be observed, that every question about this subject may be resolved into this: Is human life a blessing? If not, to what purpose is all that can be said about the order, beauty, richness, and kindly adaptations of this earthly system? What is it to me, that the heavens are glorious to behold, that the earth is fair to look upon—what to me, that I dwell in a splendid mansion—if on the whole I have more reason to be sorrowful than to be happy; if I have more to fear than to hope; if life is more to be lamented than desired; if it is a subject more of regret than gratitude? Is human life, then, a blessing? To deny it, is impiety. To deny it, is to take away all grounds of religious trust and devotion—all grounds of believing in the Sacred Scriptures, and in Jesus. For if God is not good, we can have no con-

fidence in his rectitude or veracity. If God is not good, we cannot know but he may deceive us, with even miraculous proofs of falsehood. Our life, then, is a blessing:—that is, it is a thing to be desired. Now the question is, whether, when it is so difficult to form the character which is required for future happiness; when it is so possible to fail; when the unerring Scriptures are so full of awful warnings; whether any rational being would desire existence, on the terrible condition, that if he did once fail, he would fail for ever—that if he did fail in this short life, he must sink to a helpless, remediless, everlasting woe. The word eternity passes easily from our lips, but consider what it imports—consider it deeply, and then say—who would think it a favour to take so tremendous a risk? Could any one of us have been brought into being, for one moment, in the maturity of his faculties, to decide on such a proposal, to decide whether he should take such a hazard, surely, he would make the refusal, with a strength of emotion, with a horror of feeling, that would be enough to destroy as it passed over him. "No! no!" he would exclaim, "save me from that tribunal: let me be the nothing that I was; there at least is safety:—save me from the paths of life, that conduct such multitudes—and why not me?—down to everlasting and everliving death!" Now, let us ask, can it be that the all-powerful and infinitely benevolent God has brought beings into existence in circumstances that deserve to be thus regarded!—that he has given them life so fated, so perilous, that if they could comprehend it—if it were not for their ignorance—they would abhor the gift as an infinite curse?

There are various degrees and shades of religious belief, and much that is called such is so low upon the scale, as scarcely to differ from downright scepticism. And I have often been ready to ask, when I have surveyed the aspects of life around me, whether men do *really believe* on this subject, what is written in their creed. There are those, I know, who have found a great difference between *asserting* and *believing* in this case—who, when they came to be impressed with this doctrine, felt as if all the cheerfulness of life was the most horrible insensibility; and as if all the light that was around them, the light that rested on the fair scenes of nature, was turned into darkness and gloom;—felt as if all that is bright and gladdening, in the general aspects of society and of the world, was the most treacherous and terrible illusion! And is it not so, if the popular doctrine be true? I see a busy, toiling, and oftentimes joyous multitude, thronging the villages and cities of the world—hundreds of millions of human beings, to whom happiness is more than life, and misery more than death—I see childhood, dear and lovely childhood, with its opening moral faculties, in ten thousand bosoms, throbbing with new and glad existence—I see the whole world, dwelling in an ignorance, or a moral unconsciousness, almost like that of childhood—and *are* they, all around me, every hour, by hundreds and by thousands, dropping into a region of woes and agonies and groans, never to be relieved or terminated? Gracious heaven!—if one tenth part of the human race were the next year to die amidst the horrors of famine, that evil, light as it is in the comparison, would cover the earth with a universal mourning!

How evident is it, then, that men have nothing *approaching* to a belief, of what the popular creed avers on this awful subject. I do not

bring this as an *argument* against the doctrine it lays down. But I do maintain, that men should *believe* what they say, before they condemn those who cannot say so much; that they should feel the trial of faith, before they decide on the propriety of a doubt.

I may be told that what I have been saying is not Scripture, but reasoning. I know it is reasoning. I have already shown, as I think, that the Scriptures do not warrant the doctrine that is commonly deduced from them; and to my mind, the reasoning I have used strongly enforces the rejection of it.

III. But I hasten to my final remark, which is, that the Scriptures reveal our future danger, whatever it be, for the purpose of alarming us; and therefore, that to speculate on this subject, in order to lessen our fear of sinning, involves the greatest hazard and impiety. There is a high moral use—and it is the only use for which the awful revelation of "the powers of the world to come" was intended, and most evidently and eminently fitted—and that is, to awaken fear. Whatever else the language in question means, it means this. About other topics relating to it, there may be questions; about this, none at all. And after all that has been said, I shall not hesitate to add, that we are in no danger of really believing too much, or fearing too much. And this is my answer, if any should object to the moral tendency of the views that have been offered—I maintain that a man *should fear all that he can*, and I do actually hold a belief, that affords the fullest scope for such a feeling. It is not of so much consequence that any one should use fearful words on this subject, and even violently contend for them, as that he should himself fear and tremble.

And I repeat, that there is reason. For if we adopt any opinion, short of the most blank and bald Universalism, it cannot fail to be serious. Will you embrace the idea of a literal destruction? Imagine, then, if possible, what it is to be no more for ever! Look down into the abyss of dark and dismal annihilation. Think with yourself, what it would be if all which you call yourself, your mind, your life, your cherished being, were to fall into the jaws of everlasting death! Oh! there is something dreadful beyond utterance in the thought of annihilation—to go away from the abodes of life, to quit our hold of life and being itself; to be nothing—nothing—for ever! while the glad universe should go onward in its brightness and its glory, and myriads of beings should live and be happy; and all their dwellings, and all their worlds should be overspread with life, and beauty, and joy! Imagine it, if you can. Think, that the hour of last farewell to all this had come: think of the last moment, of the last act, of the last thought—and that thought annihilation! Oh! it would be enough to start with its energy your whole being into a new life;—methinks, you would spring with agony from the verge of the horrible abyss, and cry for life—for existence—though it were woe and torment! Shall we then prefer the hope of long and remedial suffering?—Then carry forward your thoughts to that dark world, where there shall be "no more sacrifice for sin"—no more Saviour to call and win us—no more mild and gentle methods of restoration,—where sin must be purged from us, if at all, "so as by fire." Carry forward your thoughts to that dark struggle with the powers of retribution, where every malignant and hateful passion will wage the fearful war against the soul; where habit, too, will have bound

and shackled the soul with its everlasting chains of darkness; and its companions, fiends like itself, shall only urge it on to sin. When will the struggle cease? If sin cannot be resisted now, in this world of means, and motives, and mercies, how shall it be resisted *then?* When or how shall the miserable soul retrieve its steps? From what depth of eternity shall it trace back its way of ages? God only knows. To us it is not given. But we know that the retribution of a sinful soul is what we ought, above all things, to fear. For thus are we instructed: "Fear not them that, after they have killed the body, have no more that they can do: but fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." We know not what it is; but we know that such terms and phrases as we read,—"the wrath to come; the worm that dieth not; the fire that is not quenched; the blackness of darkness; the fiery indignation,"—that these words not only import what is fearful, but were *intended* to inspire a salutary dread. We know not what it is; but we have heard of one who lifted up his eyes being in torment, and saw the regions of the blessed afar off, and cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me! for I am tormented in this flame." We know not what it is; but we know that the finger of inspiration has pointed awfully to that world of calamity. We know that inspired prophets and apostles, when the interposing veil has been, for a moment, drawn before them, have shuddered with horror at the spectacle. We know that the Almighty himself has gathered and accumulated all the images of earthly distress and ruin, not to show us what it is, but to warn us of what it may be—that he has spread over this world the deep shadows of his displeasure, leaving nothing to be seen, and everything to be dreaded! And thus has he taught us, what I would lay down, as the moral of these observations, and of all my reflections on this subject, that *it is not our wisdom to speculate, but to fear!*

CURSORY OBSERVATIONS.

NO. VI. — CONCLUSION. THE MODES OF ATTACK UPON LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY, THE SAME THAT WERE USED AGAINST THE DOCTRINE OF THE APOSTLES AND REFORMERS.

In being assailed as it is, Liberal Christianity meets but with the fate that naturally attends, and actually has attended all improvement. Whether Unitarianism be a real progress of truth or not, this general statement will not be questioned. Every great advancement in science, in the arts, in politics, has had to encounter this hostility. No cause has been, nor is, more bitterly opposed, than the cause of political liberty. So it has been with religion. Christianity had to struggle long with the hostility of the world. Its doctrines were opposed, and its friends reproached. And when it declined from its purity, when it was corrupted through its popularity, through its prevalence, through its very orthodoxy, I may say — when a revival of its true doctrines was needed, the men who stood forward in that work, the *Reformers*, found that innovation was still an offence, that dissent was heresy, that truth was accounted no better than ruinous and fatal error.

I say these things, in the general, and at the outset, not to prove, nor would I anywhere pretend to prove by such an argument, that Unitarianism is right, but to show that opposition to it is no evidence of its being wrong; to show that a doctrine may be, like primitive Christianity, "everywhere spoken against," and yet be a true doctrine. For there are many, who feel from the bare circumstance, that a system is so much reproached, as if it must be wrong or questionable; and there are many more, who suffer their opinions to float on the current of popular displeasure, without inquiring at all into their justice or validity. Let such remember that no new truths ever did, nor, till men are much changed, ever can enter into the world without this odium and hostility; and let them not account that, which may be the very seal of truth, to be the brand of error!

I will now proceed to notice some of the particular modes of attack to which Liberal Christianity is subject, to meet these assaults and objections, and to show that Unitarianism, in being subjected to these assaults, suffers no new or singular fate.

I. In the first place, then, it is common to charge upon new opinions all the accidents attending their progress; to blend with the main cause all the circumstances that happen to be connected with it. This is, perhaps, not unnatural, though it be unjust. Men hear that a new

system is introduced, that a new sect is rising. They know nothing thoroughly about it, but they are inquiring what it is. In this state of mind they meet, not with a Unitarian book, but more likely with a passage from a book, taken from its connexion, culled out, it is probable, on purpose to make a bad impression, and forthwith this passage is made to stand for the system. Whenever Unitarianism is mentioned, the obnoxious paragraph rises to mind, and settles all questions about it, at once. Or, perhaps, some act or behaviour of some individual in this new class of religionists is mentioned, — and this is henceforth considered and quoted as a just representation, not only of the whole body, but of their principles also. Thus an impediment in Paul's speech was made an objection to Christianity — an objection, which he thought it necessary gravely to debate with the Church in Corinth.

I have introduced this sort of objection first, not only because it arises naturally out of a man's first acquaintance with Unitarianism, but because it gives me an opportunity to say, before I proceed any further, *how* much of what passes under this name, it is necessary, as I conceive, to defend. I say, then, it is not necessary to defend everything that passes under this name — everything that every or any Unitarian has written, or said, or done. So obvious a disclamation might seem to be scarcely needful; but it will not seem so to any who have observed the manner in which things of this sort are charged upon us. What is it to me that such and such persons have said, or written, this or that thing? What is it to the main cause of truth, which we profess to support, or to the great questions at issue? In the circumstances of the Unitarian body, in the novelty (to a certain extent) of their opinions, in the violent opposition they meet with, I see exposures to many faults; to excesses and extravagances, to mistakes and errors. I could strike off half of the opinions and suggestions that have sprung up from this progress of inquiry, and still retain a body of unspeakably precious truth. There are several things, and some things of considerable practical moment, which I seriously doubt, whether Unitarians, as a denomination, have yet come to view rightly. The violence of opposition has, undoubtedly, in some respects, carried them to an extreme, in some points of opinion and practice. And certainly I find things in their writings, which, in my judgment, are indefensible. What less *can* be said, if we retain any independence, or sobriety, or discrimination about us? What less can be said of any fallible body of men? — of any body, comprising, as all denominations do, all sorts of men, all sorts of writers and thinkers? If they are not inspired, they must be sometimes wrong.

Nay, to bring this nearer home, it were folly for any one of us to contend that everything *he* has said or written is right, or even that it is done with a *right spirit*. Here is a conflict of opinions, the eagerness of dispute, the perverting influence of controversy. Here is an effervescence of the general mind. The moral elements of the world are shaken together, if not more violently, yet more intimately, perhaps, than they ever were before. If any man can, with a severe calmness, and a solemn scrutiny, sit down and meditate upon those things which agitate so many minds; if he can separate the true from the false, and say a few things, out of many, that are exactly right, and a few things more that

are helping on to a right issue, it is, perhaps, all that he ought to expect. How much dross there may be in the pure gold of the best minds, "He that sitteth as a Refiner" only can know.

This, I confess, is my view of our controversies, and of all human controversies. I have no respect in this matter for authorities, for infallible sentences, or for the reverence and weight that are given to sentences, because they are uttered by some leader in the church, or because they are written in a book. I have no respect for the *spirit* of *quotation*,—that, having brought forward a grave proposition from some synod, or council, or book, or body of divinity, holds *that* to be enough. All men err—all synods, and councils, and consistories, and books, and bodies of divinity; which is only saying, that they all do that in the aggregate and in form, which they do individually and necessarily. And if this be true, if these views be just, how unreasonable is it to catch up sentences here and there, from any class of writings, and erect them into serious and comprehensive charges?

The real and proper question is about principles. Let these be shown to be wrong, and the denomination that abides by them must fall. On this, the only tenable ground for any reasonable man, I take my stand. I have no doubt that the leading principles of Unitarianism are true; and it would not, in the slightest degree, disturb this faith, if there could be shown me ten volumes of indefensible extracts from Unitarian writings. Whether half a volume of such, out of the hundred that have been written, can be produced, I leave not to the candour of our opponents to decide, but to their ingenuity to make out, if they are able. The constant repetition of three or four stale extracts, garbled from the writings of Priestley and Belsham, would seem to show that the stock of invidious quotations is very small. In fact, I do consider Unitarians, in comparison with any other religious body, as having written with great general propriety, soberness, and wisdom. But if they have not, or if any one thinks they have not, it will very little affect the general truth of their principles.

And how ill, let me ask, could any other body of Christians bear this sort of scrutiny? How easy would it be to select from Orthodox writings, and even from those of great general reputation, a mass of extracts that would make the whole world cry out!—one part with horror at their enormity, and another with indignation at their being presented for the purpose of showing what orthodoxy is! It would be unjust, I confess. It would disturb no independent believer in that system: and as little ought such things to disturb us.

I have now noticed the first feeling of objection which naturally arises against a new system—that which proceeds from confounding the main cause with the circumstances that attend it.

II. But another objection, and that perhaps which is first put in form, is against the alleged newness of the system. It is said that this religion is a new thing, that it is a departure from the faith of ages, that it unsettles the most established notions of things, and breaks in upon the order and peace of the churches. I state this objection strongly for the sake of our opponents, and indeed much more strongly than it deserves to be. For Unitarianism professes, so far from being a new thing, to be the old, pure, primitive Christianity. It does not profess, even in comparison with orthodoxy, to be essentially a new thing, but

only so, in certain speculative doctrines; and still less is it the friend or promoter of disorder and disunion. Nevertheless, it is, to a certain extent, a new thing; and it occasions, through the opposition made to it, much disturbance.

And can these, I ask, be valid or weighty objections in the mouths of Christians and Protestants? Christianity was once a new thing. The Athenian philosophers said to Paul, no doubt with as much contempt as any modern questioner could feel, "We would know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is." And others said, "These men that have turned the world upside down have come hither also." Yes, troublesome, "pestilent fellows," "movers of sedition," "devisors of mischief," and "doers of evil," were the first propagators of Christianity accounted, and were not ashamed thus to suffer in imitation of their slandered Master. And the *Reformers* of Christianity, in the sixteenth century, trod in the same steps, and in like manner had their "names cast out as evil." And especially was it objected to them, that they departed from the faith of ages, and invaded the repose of time-hallowed doctrines and institutions. And in the strong confidence, ay, *the strong argument of the majority*, the same things were said about the truth as are now said,—the same cry of "The church is in danger" was raised, the same anathemas were pronounced against dangerous heresies and the denying of the faith. The whole scene was acted over, that is now witnessed, of an exclusive and hostile orthodoxy, on the one hand, and a firm and unyielding dissent on the other—only that orthodoxy could then command the inquisition and the rack; and now it only sets its tribunal on the reputation of men, and subjects the mind to trials, that in some instances scarcely fall short of the tortures of the rack. This has always been the fate of innovation, and, perhaps, it always must be. And to those who, for conscience' sake, draw upon themselves this hostility to whatever is new, I would say; think it not strange concerning this fiery trial, as though any strange thing happened to you. It is the same that has happened to the reformers of faith, to the witnesses for truth, in all ages. Be not astonished or disheartened at this. Only bear it patiently. No assault, no detraction can injure you, if you bear them with the spirit of Christ. Rather will they benefit you unspeakably and for ever—benefit you in awakening that love, and meekness, and humility, the trying of which is more precious than that of gold which perisheth. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ," if ye be reproached for labouring to rescue his name and his religion from mistake and injury, "happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth on you!"

III. Another method of attack upon liberal Christianity is to awaken sentiments of pity and horror against it. I am not about to deny that this is very honestly done; but I do say that it is an unworthy mode of assault; that it appeals not to the judgment, but to the passions; and that it is very apt to be the strongest, in the weakest hands. To put on a solemn countenance, to speak in sepulchral tones of awe and lamentation, to *warn* men against this doctrine, is easy. But, alas! for the weakness of men, if it is an instrument easily wielded, it is also an instrument of terrible power with the superstitious, the timid, and unreflecting. A considerate man, a man who respects the minds and consciences of those he has to deal with, will be cautious how he takes

hold of such a weapon as this—a weapon which prevails chiefly with human weakness, which strikes the very part of our nature that most needs to be supported, which wounds only the infirm, and overwhelms only the prostrate. For I need not say, that it is precisely with minds in this situation that tones of pity and horror have the greatest influence. A man of independent thought and vigorous understanding, who could better afford to bear this sort of influence, is the very person who will not yield to it. He will say indignantly, "That is nothing to the purpose. That does not satisfy me. I did not ask you to warn me, but to enlighten me. I did not ask you to weep, but to reason. No doubt you feel as you say, and very sincerely feel thus; it is not your sincerity that I question, but your argument. You degrade my understanding, when you attempt to work upon it in this manner. I was made to think. The Lord of conscience has given me liberty to inquire; and I will not be subject to any other influence. God has called me to liberty; and man shall not lay me under bondage."

Nor is this all. Pity and horror prove nothing, indeed; but it is moreover a matter of history, that truth—whether our doctrine be true or not—that TRUTH has always made its progress amidst the *pity* and *horror* of men. Yes; it has come thus, amidst sighings, and doubtings, and shakings of the head, and warnings of danger, and forebodings of evil. Yes; it has held its way, through tokens like these; with dark countenances about it, and loud denunciations, and woeful anathemas. It has stood up and spoken in the person of its great Teacher; and men have "gnashed their teeth and rent their garments," at its voice. It has gone forth into the world, with its devoted apostles, and been accounted "the offscouring of all things." It has prophesied in sackcloth," with its faithful witnesses, and borne the cross of ignominy and reproach. The angry Sanhedrim, the bloody Inquisition, the dungeon, the rack, the martyr's stake, have testified to the *abhorrence of men against the truth!*

I do not say that the truth I hold is worthy of this glorious fellowship. But I say that its being joined in any measure to this fellowship does not prove it false. And if it be true, as I solemnly believe it is, then let not its advocates claim entire exemption from the trials of their elder brethren. It will go on, and men will speak evil of it, and they will struggle against it, and they will lament and weep;—but it will be as if they lifted up their voice to withstand the rolling seasons, or struggled against the chariot wheels of the morning, or poured out vain tears upon the mighty stream that is to bear all before it. I say this, more in sorrow, I hope, than in scorn. I am sorry for those who cannot see this matter as I think they ought to see it. I am sorry for the unhappiness, for the honest grief, which a misplaced pity, and an uncharitable zeal, and a spirit of reproach and condemnation, give them. But their grief, save for its own sake, moves me not at all. I consider it as a penance for their mistaken hostility to truth, rather than a fair admonition of error. I believe, and can believe no less, that this unhappiness is simply the *fruit* of error. Uncharitableness *must* be unhappy; anger *must* be painful; exclusion, and anathematizing, and dooming sincere brethren to perdition, *must* be works of bitterness and grief. I wonder not, that a man should weep while he is doing them; my only wonder is, that he can ever do them, and not weep!

IV. But I shall now proceed to consider one or two objections of a graver character. It is said, that the religion which Unitarianism teaches, does not meet the wants of human nature, that it does not satisfy the mind, that it fails as a support and comfort to the soul. I recur again to the observation, that it is perfectly natural that this objection should be brought against new views of religion, simply because they are new, and whether they are true or not; and therefore that no strange thing happens to them when they are thus regarded. If you take away some parts of a religion on which men have relied, you take away some part of their reliance, and they cannot feel, for a time, as if anything else would be such a support and satisfaction to them. This will be especially true, if you introduce simpler, and more rational ideas of religion. The Jew could say to the Christian, "How many feasts, and holy-days, and sabbaths, and new moons, and rites, and ordinances, on which my soul relied, have you removed from me!" The Catholic could say of the Protestant, "Where, alas! are the masses, and the confessionals, and the comfortable absolutions, and the intercessions of saints, *for me!*" And things of the same import, concerning the more *doctrinal* aspects of religion, may the Calvinist say to the Unitarian. But the Christian and the Protestant could reply to their respective opponents, "We have a reliance as sure and satisfactory as yours; and more sound and spiritual, as we judge." And so may the Unitarian say to the Calvinist.

But let us go into the real merits of the case. What *is* a foundation and a support in religion, and whence does true comfort arise? Our Saviour speaks of a foundation, when he says, "He that heareth my words and *doeth them*, I will liken to a wise man"—whose "house fell not, because it was *founded* on a rock." Surely, Unitarians do not reject *this* foundation. "But our own endeavours and virtues are not sufficient of themselves." Certainly not; and Unitarians may rely, as unfeignedly as their brethren, on the mercy of God, and they sincerely profess to do so. This satisfies them. To say, that it does not satisfy the demands of a different theology, is only saying that the speculations of the two classes differ. "But," it may be contended, "it does not satisfy *the wants of human nature*." This is a matter of which every one must judge from the feelings of his own mind. As the Unitarian experiences human nature, he would say that the simple promise of God's mercy and aid to his humble endeavours does give all needful satisfaction. A certain theory of the divine government may not be satisfied—the superstitious wants of human nature may not be satisfied; but the Unitarian believes that its real wants are.

But I go farther; though I would say what I am about to say, with all reasonable and fair qualifications. I feel obliged to use increasing caution in all general representations. There are men too intelligent and good in every class of Christians, to be very much affected by a formal creed. Nevertheless, I have not a doubt, that there are many to whom the popular religion furnishes grounds of support and satisfaction, which are not right and rational grounds. The regular plan and process of religious experience, the defined steps and dates—an exact time and moment of conversion, and the certainty of salvation after that—the efficacy of the act of faith, distinguished as it often is from the general efficacy of a holy life—"the view of Christ," and of the

atonement as relieving the sinner from his burden—"the rolling off of the burden of sin," as it is often called—the notions of a foundation, and a hope, and a joy, disconnected as they are from the result of long-tried virtue and piety—the idea of the Holy Spirit as alone doing the "effectual work" of salvation in man—doing it by a special interposition after all the sinner's efforts are over, and he is brought to despair of himself—these views, as I believe, furnish a fallacious support, and comfort, and relief, to many. I *would* lay a weight upon man's responsibility—which is, no doubt, disagreeable to him. I would tell a sinful man, that anxiety is more becoming to him than confidence and repose. He is indeed to confide and repose in the mercy of God and the interposition of Christ; but these no more avail him, than to tell him that there is wealth in store for his industry. It is, so far as his own part is concerned—it is industry, it is working, continual working, daily accumulation, that is to make him rich towards God. I would tell him that *believing* is virtually the same as doing; and that it is this doing, this constant doing, and this alone, that can roll away the burden of sin. In short, I would say, that for a sinful man to attain to the favour of God and to heaven, is the same as for an intemperate man to attain to sobriety and virtue—that it is what he must do, every day and hour, day by day and hour by hour, striving, watching, guarding, praying, keeping himself under perpetual restraint, till he is redeemed from his iniquity. In other words, I would strive to represent this matter rationally; and would say, that the sinner is to become a holy man, just as the ignorant is to become a learned man, by little and little, by constant accumulations, by gaining one truth to-day, and another to-morrow; by perpetual progress.

Now I do not deny that these things, in the general, are taught by Calvinists; but then I maintain that they are commonly taught in such a way—that they are so mixed up with certain doctrines, as that their pressure upon the soul is relieved: so that a man does not feel that he is to become a Christian just as he is to become a rich man, or a skilful, or a wise man. He does not feel this pressure of necessity upon him, every morning, and lie down with this anxiety every night, as the seeker of learning or wealth does. Alas! few feel this as they ought to do. But this is what we should strive to make men feel. And we ought to sweep away all doctrines that stand in the way of this. We should allow of no peace; we should hear of no summary method, no parcelling out of the matters of religious experience, that will make it a different thing from the daily, plain, practical, unwearied *doing* of everything a man ought to do. No believing of creeds, no paying of contributions, no regular and stated prayers, no oft-repeated confessions, proper as these are in their place—no atonement, nor election, nor special grace, nor perseverance, true as they are when truly explained—should save a man from the pressure of this instant necessity.

I conceive that the reason why Calvinism offers more support to many minds is, that it is a more artificial system, and approaches less nearly to the simple truth. It is too much a religion of seasons and times, of fixtures and props, of reliefs and substitutions, of comforts and confidences. And I am persuaded that the Roman Catholic religion would much better answer the purpose of supporting and satisfying minds, in the state now supposed. There have been, not long since, some distin-

guished converts in Germany to the Catholic faith. I could easily conceive of one of them as saying,—"Here at last I find rest; I find certainty and refuge in the infallibility and absolution of the Holy Church. This, too, is the accumulated support of ages, built on the virtues and sufferings of fathers, and confessors, and martyrs. How, also, am I affected with the real presence of the body of Christ in the sacrament, with the guardianship of saints, and the interceding tenderness of the Holy Mother! I never was so impressed with any religion as this. I never found such joy and peace in any. This is the religion for a *sinner!* This is what my depraved and burdened nature wanted!"

"Yes," replies the sound Protestant, "but it would not move *me*, nor support, nor comfort me. The impressiveness of a religion does not depend, altogether, upon its truth or falsehood, but very much on the state of the mind that receives it." And this is what we answer to the Calvinist. We say that Calvinism would make no kindly nor renewing impression on *us*. And as to comfort and support, it seems to us, in some of its features, the most cheerless and desolate of all systems.

V. But I must hasten to the last objection that I intended to notice. It is said that there is a fatal coldness and deadness in the Unitarian system; that there is no excitement in it, no reality, no seriousness, no strictness; that it is fitted to gratify the proud, the philosophic, the worldly, and the vicious.

I must again remind the reader, in the first place, that this is just what new views of religion may expect, and what they have always, in fact, encountered. It is no strange thing, that strangers to the practical sense of our principles should not confess their power. All this cry was raised against the Reformation, as loudly as it is raised against us.

Nay, it may be admitted, in the second place, without any prejudice to the cause I maintain, that new views in religion will be most likely to attract the attention of those who are least prejudiced in favour of the old: that is to say, of the less religious; and of persons, too, who have been less religious, in many instances, for the very reason, that they could not bear the errors of the popular faith. Nay more; it may be admitted that new views of religion, however true, will probably do *injury* to some. There are some most extraordinary confessions to this effect, from the lips of the Reformers. New views are liable to unsettle the minds that hastily receive them; and some, that are averse to all religion, and to all self-denial, may vaguely hope, that another doctrine would be more indulgent to their vices. Yes, and they may make it so; for what good thing has not been abused? This great subject, in fact, has been so treated and taught, that in religion, most of all, men are apt to show themselves superficial and weak creatures. And it is not strange that those who have dwelt long in darkness, should be dazzled, and bewildered, and led astray by the light, or that liberty should be a dangerous thing to the enslaved. What if Christianity had been judged by the state of the Corinthian Church?

And yet Christianity came as a religion of power and strictness, and so I maintain that it still is found to be in the form in which we hold it. If others, who are experimentally ignorant of it, may testify against it; we, who have felt what it is, may be excused if we testify in its favour. And I know that I speak the language of hundreds and thousands, when I say that religion to us is the one theme of interest—of

unspeakable, undying interest. We would not exchange the sense we have of it, for thrones and kingdoms. To take it away, would be to take from us our chief light, blessing, and hope. We have felt the power of the world to come, and no language can tell what that power is — can tell the value of an immortal hope and prospect. We have heard the great and good teacher, and we feel that "never man spake like this man." By him, we trust that we have been brought nigh to God; and this nearness consummates the infinite good, which we embrace in our religion.—On all this I might dwell long and abundantly; but I will not trust myself to say, what I feel that I might say for many, lest I be accused of "the foolishness of boasting." And if even for what I *do* say, I *am* so accused, I must adopt the apostle's justification, and say, I have been "compelled." For how can men, who feel that religion is the great resort of the mind, and the living interest, and the animating hope, consent to the charge, that all on this subject is cold and cheerless as death among them! We should be ungrateful for the first of blessings, if we could be silent. We have communed with religion in sorrow, and it has comforted us; in joy, and it has blessed us; in difficulty and trouble, and it has guided and calmed us; in temptations, and it has strengthened us; in conscious guilt and error, and this religion has encouraged, and comforted, and forgiven us; and we must testify our sense of its value. It is here that we have treasured up the joy and hope of our being; it is here that we have poured out the fulness of our hearts; and if this is to be cold and dead, we ask, in the name of sense and truth, what is it to feel? If this is philosophy, God give us more of this philosophy. Yes, it is philosophy, divine and heaven-descended; it is truth immortal; it is religion, which, if it can be carried on within us, will, we are persuaded, through God's mercy, lead us to heaven.

I have now completed the views, which, in conclusion, I intended to give of some of the popular objections to Unitarian Christianity. Let me warn every man, in close, to beware of taking any light and trifling views of the religion on which he founds his hope. If any views that ever enter our minds tend to slacken the obligation of virtue, or to let down the claims of piety, let us discard those views at once and for ever. Let us take a viper to our bosom sooner than lay a flattering unction to the soul, that will make it easier in sin. Sin is the sting of death, and it will kill and destroy all that is dear and precious to an immortal creature. Religion only is life and peace; and it is also zeal, and fervour, and joy, and hope, and watchfulness, and strictness, and self-denial, and patience unto the end.

THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION WITH OTHER SUBJECTS CONSIDERED.

DISCOURSE I.

1 Cor. x 15: "I speak as to wise men: judge ye what I say."

It was an observation of an eminent expounder of the science of jurisprudence,* that "the reason of the law is the life of the law; for though a man," says he, "can tell the law, yet if he know not the reason thereof, he shall soon forget his superficial knowledge. But when he findeth the right reason of the law, and so bringeth it to his natural reason that he comprehendeth it as his own, this will not only serve him for the understanding of that particular case, but of many others."

This comprehensive reason is as necessary in religion as in the law; which, rightly considered, indeed, is but a part of the science of religion or rectitude. The great danger to the mind, indeed, in pursuing every science, is that of being narrow and technical; and so of losing truth while it is gaining knowledge. For truth is universal; it is the conclusion derived from those facts, the possession of which we call knowledge. Truth, I say, is universal; and religious truth possesses this character as much as any other. What is true in religion, is true in everything else to which such truth is capable of being applied; true in the law, true in moral philosophy, true in the prudence of life, true in all human action.

From this position results the use of an instrument for religious investigation, to which I wish to invite your attention. The instrument I refer to is comparison. I invite you to compare religion with other things, to which it is analogous. Fairly to put this instrument into your hands, to give some examples of its use and application, will require a course of three or four lectures, which I shall give on Sunday evenings.

Let it not be supposed that there is anything new in this mode of investigation. On the contrary, it is so familiar, that it enters more or less into almost every religious discourse. It is justified by the practice of all sorts of religious and moral teachers. It is the only instrument used in that great work of Bishop Butler, entitled his Analogy. All I wish to do is, for a little time, to fix attention upon it.

It is not pretended that this instrument is infallible. The degree of proof to be gathered from any comparison, depends on the closeness of

* Lord Littleton.

the analogy. To this point, the closeness of the analogy, the main point in this kind of inquiry, I shall give the most discriminating attention that I am capable of, and shall wish my hearers constantly to judge, as wise men, what I say. The instrument, I confess, is liable to abuse. To give an instance of this: I have heard preachers liken the case of the unconverted sinner to that of a man in a burning house, or in a pestilence, or in peril of shipwreck, and they have advocated and defended the utmost extravagance of spiritual fear and effort, on the ground that the sinner is in still greater danger. Here is comparison, indeed, but no analogy. There is no analogy, that is to say, in the precise point on which the argument depends. There is analogy, indeed, in the danger, but not in the nature of the danger. In a burning house, or in a shipwreck, the peril is instant; all that can be done for escape, must be done in an hour or a moment; and men are justified in acting almost like distracted men at such a moment. But spiritual danger is of a different character; it is not all accumulated upon a given instant; it is not one stupendous crisis in a man's life, but it spreads itself over his whole being. It is not, like the whelming wave, or the already scorching fire, to bring fright and agony into the mind; on the contrary, the special characteristics of spiritual fear should be reflection, calmness, and intense thoughtfulness. That is to say, it is to be the action of the spiritual, and not of the animal nature. You perceive, therefore, that the instrument I am about to recommend to you, is to be used with great caution, with a wise discretion. In the use of it, I shall constantly hold myself amenable to that judgment of good sense, to which the apostle himself, in my text, appealed. Bishop Butler, in the great work before alluded to, limited the uses of analogy entirely to the purpose of defence. He maintained and showed, that certain facts in nature and in life, were analogous to certain doctrines in the Bible; and his argument was, not that the existence of the facts *proved* the truth of the doctrines, but simply that they took away all fair and philosophical objection from those doctrines. Thus, if the consequences of a single sin often follow a man through life, if this is actually a part of God's administration of the affairs of this world, then there is no objection to that doctrine of our Scriptures, which declares that consequences of a life of sin shall follow the offender into another state. With Bishop Butler's views of what the doctrines of revelation *are*, I have nothing here to do. I have only to say, that I am willing to be governed by a similar caution. I wish to present to you certain rational views of religion, as they appear to me, and these mainly of practical religion; and against the common allegations of insufficiency, shallowness, or untruth, in these views, I wish to appeal to what men allow to be sound, and satisfactory, and thorough, in other departments of human action and feeling.

There is, however, one objection to this method of inquiry itself, which I must consider before I enter upon it. It is said that religion is God's work in the soul, a peculiar, if not a supernatural work; and hence it is inferred that religion is not to be judged of, on principles common to it with other subjects and qualities. I answer, that the conclusion does not follow from the premises. I might deny the premises, perhaps, in the sense in which they are put; but for the purposes of the proposed inquiry, I need not deny them. I may allow that

religion is the special work of God in the soul, which it is in a certain sense, and yet I may fairly maintain that it is to be judged of like other principles in the soul. For all Christians of a sound and reasonable mind are now accustomed to admit, that God's work in the soul does not violate the laws of the soul; that the influence of the Infinite Spirit, whatever it be, is perfectly compatible with the moral constitution of the being influenced. But *how* is man influenced in other things? The answer is, by considerations, by reasons and motives, by fears and hopes. So is he influenced in religion. All moral influence, whether derived from Scripture, from preaching, from reflection, or from conscience, is one great and perfectly rational appeal to man's moral nature; and the result is to be judged of accordingly. What religion is true,—and what is true in the views presented of the received religion; what are proper and just exhibitions of it; what are the due and right means and methods of cultivating it; and what are its claims upon us,—all these matters are to be considered, as we consider other obligations, truths, developments of character, and methods of improvement. It is no argument for unreasonableness, for impropriety of conduct or manners, for extravagance, fanaticism, or folly, that the subject is religion, or that religion is the work of God in the soul. This, on the contrary, is the strongest of reasons for insisting that religion should be perfectly and profoundly sober, rational, and wise. That which comes from the fountain of reason, and as its gift to a rational nature, will not, we may be sure, contradict the laws of that reason, and that nature.

This is a point to be insisted on, and the proposed discussion may have special advantages in this view. Indeed, I know of no other way in which the worst practical errors are to be removed from the Church, but by the application of the test in question; by carrying religion entirely out from the walls of conventicles, and the pale of technical theology, and from all the narrow maxims of peculiar religious coteries and sects, into the broad field of common sense and sound judgment. The advocates, whether of a speculative system or of a practical economy in religion, can never tell how it looks, till they see it in this open light, and in its relation to the whole surrounding world of objects. Kept within a certain circle and never looking beyond it, and holding that things may be true in that circle, which are true nowhere else, men may reason in that circle, and reason strongly, and reason for ever, and never advance one step towards broad, generous, universal truth. Thus it has always been, that mistake, fanaticism, practical error in religious matters, have rested their claims on the peculiar, unusual, supernatural character of the subject. Religious extravagance of every sort has always had its stronghold within barriers that have shut out the common judgment and sense of the world. Nay, I may add, since I have spoken of comparing religion with other qualities of the mind, that there are many by whom it is yet to be learnt, that religion *is* a quality of the mind. They are apt to consider it as a gift, and an influence, rather than as a quality, principle, and part of the soul. They consider it as something superinduced, bestowed upon human nature, rather than as the great and just result of that nature. They do not feel as if it were something dear to that nature—something not forced upon its reluctant acceptance, not sustained in its rebellious bosom—but che-

rished within it, craved by it, welcome and precious to all its strongest affections and noblest faculties. So the *many*, I say, are not accustomed to regard it. They do not see it as the great development of the soul; but they see it as a communication. And seeing it as a communication—as coming, in some supernatural manner, from God, they are apt to set it apart from other qualities and pursuits. They do not deal freely with it. If they do not feel as if it were something *above* reason, they, at least, feel as if it were something with which reason may not strongly and fearlessly grapple—as if it were too etherial an essence for the plain dealing of common sense. To this plain dealing, however, it must be brought. To this we are justified in bringing it, by the clearest principles of all rational theology; for all such theology admits, that God does no violence to the laws of human nature, when he works within it both to will and to do according to his good pleasure. And I say and repeat, that to this test of sober and judicious comparison, religion must come, if it is ever to be disabused of the errors that have burthened and enslaved it. How, otherwise, could you proceed, if you had to deal, for instance, with the absurdities of Hindoo superstition? You might try to approach it in other ways; as, for instance, with solemn tones and solemn asseverations; but you would find, at length, that you could do nothing else with it, but to bring it into comparison with other principles and manifestations of human nature and human life. You would say, "This penance of yours, this hanging yourself from a tree, in a burning sun, to die, is absurd, useless, uncalled for by the Deity. Who ever thought of seeking happiness or securing the friendship of any other being, in this way?" And if he were to answer that religion is unlike every other principle in its exactions, and that God is not to be pleased as other beings are, you would undertake to show him, that the principle of goodness is everywhere the same; that God, whose nature is goodness, cannot be pleased with pain for its own sake; that he desires no sacrifice which can effect no good end. That is to say, you would endeavour to reason with the superstitious devotee, upon general principles; upon principles applicable alike to religion and to every other analogous subject.

This is what I shall now attempt to do with religion in general, by proceeding to some particular instances. The instances, which I shall take up in the remainder of this discourse, belong to the department of first principles; and in them I shall chiefly address the religious sceptic.

I. In the first place, let us look at the very elements of religion. By some it is denied, that there are any such elements. They say that religion is altogether a matter of institution and appointment. They say that it has been imposed upon mankind by priests and by governments; and but for these external influences, they say, that there never would have been such a thing as religion in the world. Let us look at these assumptions in the light of a comprehensive philosophy.

Now, it is to be observed, that the basis of every other science and subject in the world is laid in certain indisputable first principles. In other words, there are certain undeniable facts, either in nature or in the mind, on which, as a foundation, every system of truth is built up. Thus in the natural sciences, in mineralogy, in chemistry, and botany and astronomy, there are certain facts in nature, which are received as the basis. These facts are generalized into laws, and these laws are

formed into systems. Newton saw the apple fall, and from this fact he proceeded, till he had established the laws of planetary motion, and the sublime system of the universe. So in the abstract science of geometry, certain unquestionable truths or axioms are laid down; and so in the science of the mind, certain irresistible emotions and acts of the mind are taken, as the ground of each of these departments of philosophy. Even the department of taste has its undeniable first truths. Now, the science or subject of religion has, in the same way, its indisputable first truths. In the mind, there are certain religious facts, as clearly manifested as any metaphysical facts, or any emotions of taste. But how do we come to the knowledge of these latter classes of facts? I answer, by experience, and by nothing else. And how do we come to the knowledge of the religious facts in the mind? I answer, by the same means, and no other.

What then is the conclusion? Why, that religion has a foundation in our nature as truly as mental philosophy. A man may deny this; he may resort to his presumptuous assertions, and say, that religion is nothing but an imposition, a dogma, and a fancy. But he might just as well assert that reason is nothing but an imposition, and a dogma, and a fancy. He may point to the diversities of religion, and tell us that everything is denied by one party or another, and thence infer that nothing can be true. But he might as well draw the same inference from the diversified forms, in which the principle of reason has presented itself, whether in the absurd conduct of life, or in the strange history of opinions.

What, then, I repeat, is the conclusion? It is this. Religion is true; I do not say that every religion is true. But I say that religion in general, is a true principle of human nature. I say, that there is a real science of religion, a deep-founded and unquestionable philosophy of religion, as truly as there is any other science or philosophy in the world. If experience is the test of truth, religion is true. If universality is the test of truth, religion is true. There never was a nation nor tribe found on earth, in which the feelings of conscience and of adoration were not found. And he, who is ever, at any moment, shaken in his primary religious convictions by the bold assaults of scepticism, may justly rally, and fairly and fearlessly say to his assailant, if anything in the world is true, religion is true.

II. So then do we lay the foundations of the religious principle; and now let us proceed to consider, in the light proposed, the evidences of that religion, which we receive as bearing the special sanction of heaven. And the observation to be made is, that the evidences of Christianity are to be weighed, as other evidences are weighed. And they are, in fact, just such proofs as may be rendered familiar to us, by what passes in every court of justice. In the first place, there are the Christian witnesses; and such witnesses, indeed, as were never produced in any other cause; men not only of unimpeachable character, of great and acknowledged virtue, but who have given in their writings the most extraordinary example of the absence of all enthusiasm that the world can show—men, I say, and such men, who spent laborious and painful lives, and suffered bloody deaths, in attestation, not of some fancy or imagination in their own minds, not of their *belief* that they were *inspired* merely, but in attestation of certain manifest and miraculous facts. And then in the comparison of their testimonies, we have the

strongest corroboration of their honesty and truth. On the one hand, there are a few slight discrepancies between them, just sufficient to show that there could have been no collusion; and on the other hand, numerous and evidently undesigned coincidences, both with themselves and with contemporary profane writers, which put the strongest stamp of verisimilitude upon their narrations. And, then, again the moral character of these productions is such as to set their authors above all suspicion of disingenuity—such as to show that dishonest and bad men could not have given birth to them, and such, in fact, as to constitute a strong, independent argument for their divine origin. But I confine myself now to this one branch of the evidence, the *testimony:* and I say that if such a weight of testimony were produced in a court of justice, all the records of judicial proceedings could show nothing stronger, or more satisfactory. I say that men are every day deciding and acting upon a tithe of the evidence that is offered to support the Christian religion. What if there *is* not anything amounting to the force of mathematical demonstration? The case does not admit it; and in the ordinary affairs of life, men do not demand it. Why shall they not, in religion, as in other things, act upon the evidence they have? Suppose that it is less clear to some than to others. Suppose, that it amounts with them only to a strong probability. Suppose that they have doubts. Do doubts paralyze them in other cases? Does not a man make all sorts of sacrifices, become an exile, tread dangerous coasts, breathe tainted climes, for a distant and uncertain fortune? But has anybody *told* him, that the wealth he seeks waits for him? Has any miracle been wrought before his eyes? Has God assured him, beyond any doubt, of the fruition of his hopes? Yet he ventures much, ventures all, for the chance of worldly fortune: can he venture nothing for the hope of heaven? Let him walk in the way of the Christian precepts. That cannot harm him, whether there be a future life or not. Let his conduct follow the weight of evidence. No reasonable being can gainsay or condemn him, for being governed by the strongest probability. This is the only safe or wise course. "Let him do the will of God, and he shall know of the doctrine whether it be from God." If he will not do this, if he is averse to the strictness of Christian virtue, he has cause enough to suspect the source of his scepticism. Nay, more; we have a right, in accordance with what is fairly claimed on other subjects, to demand of him, who would investigate the Christian evidences, a religious spirit, and a virtuous temper. He who should undertake to pronounce upon a great work of genius, a poem or a painting, without any cultivation or congeniality of taste, would be looked upon as an unqualified and presumptuous judge. By the same rule, he who would fairly examine the evidences of a pure system of religion must, in reason, be a good and devout man; else his investigation is nothing worth. Have infidels often considered this? Have they generally approached the Christian evidences in this spirit?

But let us take some notice, in the third place, and finally, of the Christian records. I say, then, that our Christian books *are to be regarded, in some important respects, as other books are.* Men, for instance, are not to take up the Bible and read it, as if they expected it to do them good, or give them light, in any unusual or unknown way. They are not to expect any illumination in perusing the

Scriptures, other than that of reason and piety. Some other may be given in extraordinary cases, but they are not to require miracles. They are not to expect to understand this book, because it is the Bible, in any other way, or upon any other principles of interpretation, than they would use to gather the meaning of any ancient book. And as many portions of the Bible, the speculative and controversial parts particularly, are clothed in the polemic phraseology of an ancient age, and have taken their hue and form from ancient disputes, states of mind, customs of society, &c.—as all this is true of some portions of Scripture, the unlearned reader cannot, without more information than most persons possess, reasonably expect to understand those parts at all. Suppose that a plain reader, totally unacquainted with the systems of Plato or Aristotle, or with the Manichean philosophy, should, in perusing an ancient book, meet with a passage crowded with the terms and modes of thought borrowed from either of these systems. Can you doubt, that, with the aid of any common sense, he would at once say, "I do not understand this? Would he not justly conclude that he must read other books, and make himself more acquainted with the speculations of that ancient period, before he could understand the passage which had fallen under his notice?

So he would judge of ancient profane writings, and so he ought to judge of ancient sacred writings. The wisdom that speaks in the two cases is different; but the method of interpreting that wisdom is the same in both. But *so* most Christian readers do *not* judge. They read the Bible as if it were a modern book. Or, they feel as if it would dishonour the Bible, to suppose that any part of it were necessarily obscure or unintelligible to the unlearned reader. They look upon the Scriptures as a direct revelation, or as the immediate and express word of God himself, rather than as a series of messages declaring, after the manner of the times, the will of God. And entertaining the former of these impressions, they rightly argue that a book, purporting to be a revelation to mankind, unless all men can readily understand it, is no revelation. But there can be no doubt, I presume, that this impression is a mistaken one. The sacred writers were commissioned to declare certain truths; and they were left to declare them after their own manner, and the manner of the age; and it is no more easy to understand the Bible than it is to understand *any* ancient book. This *conclusion* must be admitted, whatever may be thought of the *reasoning*. Explain the doctrine of inspiration as we may,—it is an unquestionable truth, and every enlightened student of the Bible must know it, that there are considerable portions of it, which cannot be understood without much study, and without, to say the least, some learning which the body of the people do not possess. Every sensible man, who has really studied his Bible, must know that this is the case with considerable portions of the Prophecies and Epistles. The people at large are reading these continually, and think to derive benefit from them, and do, no doubt, affix to them some vague meaning; but they do not, and cannot understand them. They comprehend what is practical for the most part, and all that is essential; but much of what is speculative and controversial, I repeat it, with their present knowledge, they do not and cannot understand.

This may be a hard saying to many; but I believe it ought not, being

unquestionably true, to be withholden. It may be an unpopular doctrine; but that circumstance, I hope, does not prove it unimportant. There certainly is a mistake on this subject; and the greatness of the error is but the greater reason for correcting it. Besides, the error is far from being harmless. This constant reading of what is not well comprehended—this attempt to grasp ideas which are perpetually escaping through ancient and unintelligible modes of thought and phraseology, this formal and forced perusal of obscure chapters with a sort of demure reverence, tends to throw dulness, doubt, and obscurity over all our conceptions of religion. The Bible, too, instead of being a bond of common faith and fellowship to Christians, is made an armory for polemics. And there are some controversies among the body of Christians, which can never be intelligently and properly settled, till they qualify themselves in a better manner to understand the Scriptures. And yet multitudes of men and women are confidently deciding controversies on the most difficult questions of philology and interpretation, who never read — not Hebrew or Greek — but who never read a book on criticism, who never read a book on ancient customs, who never read a book on the circumstances of the primitive age, on the difficulties and disputes prevailing, on the Jewish prejudices, or the Gentile systems of philosophy:—and if I were asked what I would give for the critical judgment of these men and women, I answer, *nothing—nothing at all.* I derogate nothing from their general intelligence: and their judgment may be good, even on the point in question, as far as their common sense will carry them; and upon the *general strain* of the Scriptures, they may judge well, and may come, *on the whole*, to a right conclusion. But upon deep questions of criticism, they ought not to pretend to judge. I give that credit to the modesty of many among us, as to presume that they do not undertake to decide upon matters of this sort; and to those who have not this modesty, it may be fairly recommended as the first step of a good and sound judgment.

I would particularly guard what I have said on this subject from injurious misapprehensions. I certainly do not discourage the reading of the Scriptures. I only urge the needful preparation for it in regard to those parts which are hard to be understood. I do not say that unlearned Christians cannot understand their religion; for their religion, in substance, is contained in passages that are level to the humblest apprehension. I do not disparage the Bible. Its value consists in the body of its undisputed truths and revelations. Besides, be the case as it may, it can be no disparagement of the sacred volume to state *what it is.* And that it does require study, and learning to understand portions of it—what do all the labours of learned men, what do innumerable volumes of commentaries, and whole libraries of sacred criticism show, if they do not show this? Why all these studies, let us ask, if unlearned men can understand the difficult and doubtful passages of their Bibles?

The truth is, in my judgment, that the body of mankind never ought to have been disturbed with those theological disquisitions which involve or require a deep knowledge of criticism, any more than they are with the subtilties of the law, or with the abstruse speculations of philosophy, the disputes of anatomists, metaphysicians, and men of science. General readers, not to say those who read not at all, are just as unable to understand one as the other. There are questions in reli-

gion, undoubtedly, which are proper for the general mass of readers. And there are points, doubtless, connected with every question, which are suitable for popular discussion. There must be discussion; and since men cannot agree, there must be dispute. Let there be controversy, then; and let it range from the highest to the lowest subjects. All I would contend for is, that those controversies, which are addressed to the body of the people, be such as the people are prepared to understand; and that more curious questions be confined in religion, as in other things, to the learned. This reasonable discrimination would have cut off many disputes which, among the mass of the people, are perfectly useless, and might have saved us from some of our unhappy dissensions.

In fine, and to sum up my observations, let Religion — I do not say now as a matter of experience and practice — but let Religion, in its words, its subjects, and its controversies, be treated as other things are — as the Law, Medicine, or any of the Sciences. Let what is practical, what is easily understood, what the simple and sound judgment of a man can compass, be commended in religion, as in science, to all who can and will read it. Let what is abstruse, what is hard to be understood, what belongs to the department of profound criticism, be left for those who have opportunity, time, and learning for it. Let others read their writings as much as they please; but let them not judge till they read; let not their confidence outrun their knowledge. I think this is safe advice. I cannot conceive of any possible harm it can do. I believe it would do much good. I believe that it would tend to the promotion of a practical and affectionate piety among us; and I think, moreover, that it would do this special good: — it would lead men to rest their religious hopes and fears not on matters of doubtful disputation, but on those essential, moral, plain, practical grounds, which are the great foundations of piety and virtue.

I have now presented in a single light, the light of analogy, the first principles of religion, and the evidences and records of that particular dispensation of religion, which, as Christians, we have embraced. In my next lecture, I shall proceed to examine, in the same way, what is usually considered as the beginning of religion, or rather of religious character, in the human mind; in other words, the doctrine of conversion.

DISCOURSE II.

John iii. 3: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

It will help us to understand the subject of Conversion, and will prepare us to pursue the analogy proposed in this series of Discourses, to take a brief historical view of that language, by which, among theologians, the doctrine has been most commonly expressed: I mean that language which is founded on the figure of a new birth. Three views are to be taken of it: first, of its signification among the Jews; secondly, of its use among the early Christian teachers; and thirdly, of its application to modern Christian communities. And corresponding to this distinction, there are three kinds of conversion to be considered; the Jewish, the ancient Christian conversion, and that which is to be urged among men, already Christian in their education and general belief.

Let me observe, in passing, that the phrases, "born again," "new creation," &c. are not the only expressions in the New Testament which are applied to the same subject: for men were required to be changed, to be turned from the error of their ways—were said to have passed from darkness to light, from the power of sin and Satan to the service of God and the wisdom of the just. In short, a very great variety of language was used to describe the process of becoming a good man, and a follower of Christ.

But the figurative expressions just referred to have been most constantly used in modern times, to express that change which is meant by conversion. The reason for this, I suppose, is obvious. There has been a striking and manifest disposition, ever since the primitive simplicity departed from religion, to regard and treat it as a mystery: and therefore the most obscure and mysterious expressions have, in preference, been adopted to set it forth. And yet, the figure in question, I shall soon have occasion to observe, is less adapted to set forth the spiritual nature of religion, than almost any of the representations that are current in the New Testament.

On every account, therefore, it is desirable that this language should be explained, and that the explanation should be fixed in our minds, even though it should require some repetition to do it.

What, then, is the meaning of the phrase, "being born again"?

I. When our Saviour said to the inquiring Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again," we may well suppose, that he did not use language either new or unintelligible to him. Nor would it comport with a proper view of our Saviour's character to suppose that he used the language of mystery. Nicodemus, indeed, affected to think it mysterious, saying, "How can a man be born when he is old?" It was not, however,

because he did not understand, but because he did understand it. For the language in question was familiar at that day; it was in the mouth of every Jew, much more in that of a master in Israel. We learn, from the Jewish writers of that day, that the phrase, "born again," was at that time, and had been all along, applied to proselytes from paganism. A convert, or a proselyte to the Jewish religion, was currently denominated, "one born again," "a new-born child," "a new creature." This language they adopted, doubtless, to express what they considered to be the greatness of the distinction and favour implied in being a Jew. It was nothing less than a "new creation." In the apparent misapprehension of Nicodemus, therefore, I see nothing but the astonishment natural to a Jew, on being told that he, favoured of God as he had thought himself,—that he, one of the chosen people, must himself pass through another conversion, another proselytism, in order to see the kingdom of God.

But to revert to the phrases which conveyed to Nicodemus this unwelcome truth; I say that they referred originally to proselytism to the Jewish religion. This was the known signification of these phrases at the time. There can be no dispute or question on this point. Something like this use of these phrases was common among other nations at that period, as among the Romans, the change from slavery to citizenship was denominated a new creation. It appears, then, as I have already observed, that this expression is not the best adapted to set forth the spiritual nature of religion, since it was originally used to describe a visible fact, an outward change.

II. But let us proceed from the Jewish use of this language, to the adoption of it among the first teachers of Christianity. It was natural that the Christian teachers, in calling men from an old to a new dispensation, from the profession of an old, to the reception of a new religion, should take up those expressions, which before had been applied to an event precisely similar. There was a visible change of religion required both of Jews and Pagans, the adoption of a new faith and worship. It was an event publicly declared and solemnized by the rite of baptism.

Far be it from me to say, that the Gospel required nothing but an outward profession and proselytism. This was too true of Judaism, though without doubt there were devout individuals among the Jews, who had more spiritual views. But it was too true of that nation of formalists, that they desired little more than to make proselytes to their rites and ceremonies. And on this account our Saviour upbraids them, in that severe declaration, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more a child of hell than yourselves:"—you proselyte him to your own proud, Pharisaical, and conceited system of cabalistic notions and dead formalities. But surely, if there ever were upon earth teachers who most strenuously insisted upon a spiritual renovation, they were Jesus and his apostles. Still, however, we are not to forget that their language, in reference to the change required, implied an outward proselytism, as well as a spiritual renovation; implied the reception of a new religion, considered as a matter of speculation, faith, and visible worship, as well as the adoption of inward feelings, accordant with the spirit and precepts of this religion. Both of these things they must have demanded by their very situation, as teachers of Christianity.

III. The way is now prepared to consider what meaning the language of our text is to have, when applied to *members of Christian communities in modern times.* And the discrimination to be made here is perfectly evident. One part of the meaning, anciently attached to this language, fails entirely: the other stands in the nature of things, and must stand for ever. What fails, is what relates to the outward change. There can be no proselytism to a new faith among us; no conversion to a new worship; no adoption of a new system, nor adherence to a new sect. All the conversion, therefore, that can now take place, is of a purely moral or spiritual nature. It is a change of heart, a change of character, of feelings, of habits. Where the character, the feelings, and habits are wrong, and in such proportion as they are wrong, this change is to be urged as the very condition of salvation, of happiness, of enjoying peace of conscience, God's forgiveness, and the reasonable hope of heaven. "Except a 'bad' man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The subject, in this view of it, would seem to be exceedingly plain. Conversion is no mysterious doctrine. It is no peculiar injunction or precept of the Christian religion. It is the injunction and precept of every religion. The bad man must become a good man; the sinful must repent; the vicious must reform; the selfish, the passionate, and sensual, must be pure, and gentle, and benevolent; or they cannot be happy here or hereafter. This, I say, is no mysterious doctrine. It is what every man's conscience preaches to him. Strange would it be, if, in a religion so simple and reasonable as ours, that on which everything in our moral welfare hangs, should be a mystery. Strange, if a stumbling-block should be placed at the very entrance to the way of religion.

But simple, obvious, and unquestionable as these views of conversion are, there is no little difficulty in obtaining for them a general assent, or in causing them to be fully carried out in the minds of those who embrace them. The true and natural view of the subject is confounded with the ancient features of it. We are thinking of something like a proselytism, of a time, and an epoch, and a great experience, and a sudden change. We have, perhaps, been taught all this from our youth up. We have heard about obtaining religion, as if it were something else than obtaining inward habits of devotion, and self-government, and disinterestedness, and forbearance, and all goodness, which it takes a life fully to acquire and confirm. We have heard about obtaining religion, or obtaining a change, or obtaining a hope, as if it were the work of a month, or a day, or a moment. It demands years, or a life, to obtain a great property, or to obtain learning, or to build up a distinguished reputation; while the far greater work of gaining a holy mind, a pure and good heart, you would suppose, from what you often hear, could be accomplished in a single week, or hour.

I do not forget that religion has its beginning; and if the language in common use was, that at such a time, a man began to be religious, instead of having become so, I should have no objection to it. I do not deny that there are epochs in religious experience, times of deeper reflection, of more solemn impression, and more earnest prayer; times of arousing to the moral faculties, of awakening to the conscience, of concern and solicitude about the interests of the soul; and I would to God

these times were more frequent in the experience of us all! It was in conformity with this view, that Whitfield said, that he wished he could be converted a thousand times every day. I do not deny, then, that there are epochs in religious feeling. On the contrary, I believe that the whole progress of every mind, and of every life, may, to a considerable extent of its history, be dated from certain epochs. A man will find it to have been so in his mind and in his studies. Certain impressions have been made upon him at certain periods, in consequence of which he has taken up some new study, or pursued the old with greater zeal; certain impressions which have given a bias and character to his whole mind. And those who are pursuing more visible acquisitions than those of the mind, may have found it so with them. At some certain period they began this work; and at other periods they have been stimulated to new diligence; they have resolved to use greater economy, industry, and method. There is a beginning, then, and there are epochs in every pursuit; but who ever thought of confounding, as men do in religion, the beginning with the end, the epoch with the progress, the starting-place with the goal of attainment? Who ever thought of calling the first enthusiasm of the youthful student, *learning*, or the first crude essays of the young artist, *skill?*

Does it seem to any one, that I do injustice to the popular impressions about religion? Am I reminded that, although men do say that they get religion at a certain time, yet that they are taught, also, that they must grow in this, that they have acquired only the first elements, and must go on to perfection? Still I say, that the *language* is wrong; the language, which implies, that he who has acquired the first elements of such a thing, has acquired the thing itself, is wrong. But I say more. I say it is a language that is liable to mislead. A man, who uses it, will be apt to think he has obtained more than he really has obtained. He will be apt to think more highly of himself, than he ought to think. His language implies too much, and of course it is liable to puff him up with pride; to make him think well of himself, and to speak slightly of others, rather than to awaken in him a proper and true humility; and to inspire a rash confidence and a visionary joy, rather than a just sobriety, and a reasonable self-distrust. And I say still farther, and repeat, that there are false impressions about religion itself, derived from these notions of conversion. Religion is not felt to be that result of patient endeavour which it is. It is made a thing too easy of acquisition. He who, in one week, in one day, in one hour, nay, in one moment, can pass through a change that insures heaven to him, has reduced the mighty work to a light task indeed. He may boast over those who are taking the way of patient and pains-taking endeavour; he may charge them with the guilt of insisting much on a good moral life; but certainly he should not boast of his own way as the most thorough and laborious.

But I must dwell a little more particularly, in regard to conversion, on that comparison which I proposed to make between religion and other acquisitions of the mind. And the special point to be considered, the only one, indeed, about which there is any difference of opinion, is the alleged suddenness of conversion. I have already said that this is a feature of the change in question, which is borrowed from the ancient conversion, and borrowed, too, from the outward and visible part of it.

I now say that it cannot appertain to what is inward and spiritual. No change of the inward mind and character can be sudden. The very laws of the mind forbid it.

But I must not fail to show you that the comparison I am about to make is founded on the strictest analogy. It will be said, I know, that the change we are speaking of is unlike any other, and, therefore, that the ordinary processes of the mind furnish no analogy for it. But in what is it unlike? It is a change; a change of heart; a change in the affections, dispositions, habits of the soul. Moreover, it is a change effected in view of motives. A man becomes a good man, not blindly, not irrationally, but for certain reasons. He feels that the evil course is dangerous, and therefore he resolves to turn from it. He believes that there is happiness in religion, and therefore he seeks it. More than all, he feels that he ought to be a good man, and therefore he strives to be so. But still it may be said, there is a difference; and that the difference consists in this; that conversion is wrought in the soul by the special act of God; that the work is supernatural; that the change is a miracle. Grant that it be so. Suppose it to be true, perhaps it is true, that the secret reluctance of the mind to resist its wrong tendencies, and to restrain its evil passions is such, that a special act of God is always exerted to put it in the right way. But will God, who made the soul, who formed every part of its curious and wonderful mechanism, derange the operations of that soul, in order to save it? Let any one say, if he pleases, that it is a dead soul, a mechanism without any motion, and that nothing but a special impulse from its Former can ever set it in motion. But when it does move, will it not move in obedience to the laws of its nature? This, be it observed, is all that we say, to make out the assumed analogy. Let the cause of its operations be what it will, we say that the laws of its operations will be always the same; in other words, that the religious action of the soul takes place after the same manner, follows the same processes, as all other action of the soul. This, certainly, is the testimony of all experience. No one finds himself becoming religious under any other influence than that of motives of some sort. No man finds it an easier or speedier work to become a Christian, than to pass from ignorance to learning, from indolence of mind to activity, from low to lofty tastes, or from any one state of mind to any other. Our conclusion, then, is based on facts; it is therefore the dictate of philosophy; and it certainly is, so far as I know, the doctrine of all rational theology.

The processes of religious experience, therefore, are to be judged of like the processes of all other experience. Suppose, then, that you knew a man who was indolent in spirit, and infirm of purpose; and that you had sought and found the means, at some favouring moment, to arouse him from his lethargy, and to put him in the path of action. Would you say, that in the hour of his first impression, of his first resolution, he had become a man of energy and firmness? Nay, how long would it probably be, before he could be justly said to bear that character? Or, suppose that you knew a parent who neglected the care of his children; and that, inviting him some day to your apartment, you had, by many reasonings, so impressed his mind with the dangers of this course of neglect, that he had resolved to amend; and suppose that by the aid of many such impressions and resolutions, he

should, at length, become a good parent. Would you say that you had sent him from your house that day, a good parent? If you did so, I am sure that your sober neighbours would hold your language to be very strange, and would not a little suspect you of being no better than a credulous enthusiast. Or, suppose once more, that having a friend who was devoid of all taste, you should suddenly open a gallery of pictures and statues to him, and thus rouse the dormant faculty. Would you say, on the strength of that first impulse to improvement, he had become a man of taste? Why, then, shall it be said, that a bad man, in bare virtue of one single hour of religious impressions, has become a good man? Religious affections have no growth peculiar to themselves, —no other growth than all other affections.

The phrase most frequently used to describe the suddenness of conversion is that of *obtaining religion*. It is said that, at a certain time, a man has "obtained religion." Now I am persuaded that, if we should separate religion into its parts, or view it under its practical aspects, no such phrase could be found, at any given moment, to apply to it. What would be thought of it, if it were said that, at any one moment, a man had obtained devotion, or a gentle disposition! Let a man undertake the contest with his anger: and how long will it take to subdue that passion to gentleness and meekness! How long will it be, before he will stand calm and unmoved, when the word of insult breaks upon his ear, or the storm of provocation beats upon his head! Or, let him endeavour to acquire a habit of devotion: and how many times will he have occasion bitterly to lament that his thoughts of God are so few and cold; that he is so slow of heart to commune with the all-pervading presence that fills heaven and earth! Perhaps years will pass on, and he will feel that he is yet but beginning to learn this great wisdom, and to partake of this unspeakable joy. Or, to take a word still more practical, — what would you think of a man who should say, that, at a certain time, he had obtained virtue? "What idea," you would exclaim, "has this man of virtue? Some strange and visionary idea surely," you would say, "something different from the notion which all other men have of virtue." I cannot help thinking that this instance detects and lays open the whole peculiarity of the common impression about a religious conversion. Virtue implies a habit of feeling and a course of life. It is the complexion of a man's whole character, and not one particular and constrained posture of the feelings. Virtue is not a thing that walks the stage for an hour, with a crowd around it; it walks in the quiet and often lonely paths of real life. Virtue, in short, is a rational, habitual, long-continued course of feelings and actions. And just as much is religion all this. Religion is just as rational, habitual, abiding. What do I say? Religion and virtue are the same thing in principle. Religion involves virtue as a part of itself. And in that part of it which relates to God, it is still just as rational surely, and habitual and permanent in the mind, as in that part of it which relates to man. That is to say, piety is just as much so as virtue. And it is therefore as great and strange a mistake, for a man to say, that he obtained religion at a certain time, as it would be to say, that at a certain time he obtained virtue. Neither of them can be obtained so suddenly.

To sum up what I have said, —conversion originally meant two

things, an outward proselytism, and an inward change. It was the former of these only that was, or could be sudden and instantaneous. An idolater came into the Christian assembly, and professed his faith in the true God, and in Jesus, as his messenger. This, of course, was done at a particular time. But this meaning of the term has no application to Christian communities at the present day. Or there was a certain time, when the Pagan or the Jew became convinced of the truth of the Christian religion, and therefore embraced it as his own. And hence it was that faith, rather than love, became the grand representative and denomination of Christian piety. This faith, like every result in mere reasoning, might have its birth and its complete existence on a given and assignable day, when some miracle was performed before its eyes, or some extraordinary evidence was presented. But these ideas evidently cannot apply to nations brought up in the forms and faith of Christianity.

Anciently, then, conversion was sudden. It was so from the very necessity of the case. But from the same necessity of the case it cannot be so now. That which was sudden in conversion, the change of ceremonies, of faith, of worship, of religion, as a system, fails in its application to us: while that which remains, the spiritual renovation of the heart, is the very reverse of sudden — it is the slowest of all processes.

The notice of one or two objections, that may be made to the views now stated, will, I think, clear up all further difficulties with the subject; and with this, I shall conclude my discourse.

In the first place, if the bad man, when he resolves and *begins* to be a good man, is not a good man and a Christian, it may be asked, what is he? and what is to become of him, if he dies in this neutral state? That is to say, if as a bad man he is not to be condemned to misery, nor as a good man to be raised to happiness, what *is* the disposition to be made of his future state?

To the first question, what is he? — I answer, that he is just a man who resolves and begins to be good, and that is all that he is. And to the second question, I reply, that he shall be disposed of, not according to our technical distinctions, but according to the exact measure of the good or evil that is in him. Let us bring these questions to the test of common sense. If an ignorant man, who resolves and begins to learn, is not a learned man, what is he, and what will be his fate? If a passionate man, resolving and beginning to be meek, is not a meek man, what is he, and what is to become of him, in the great and just retribution of character? Do not these questions present and solve all the difficulties involved in the objection? They are difficulties that belong to a system of theology, which regards all mankind as either totally evil and unregenerate, or essentially regenerate and good; a system which appears to me as much at war with common sense and common experience, as would be that system of practical philosophy, which should account all men to be either poor or rich, either weak or strong, either miserable or happy, and admit of no transition states from one to the other.

In the next place, it may possibly be objected, that the views which I have advanced of a change of heart as slow and gradual, are lax and dangerous. Men, it may be said, upon this ground will reason thus:—

"Since religion is the work of life, we need not concern ourselves. The days and years of life are before us, and we can attend to religion by and by." But because religion is the work of a whole life, is that a reason for wasting a fair portion of the precious and precarious season? Because religion is the work of every instant, is that a reason for letting many of them pass unimproved? Because the work of religion cannot be done at once, because it requires the long progress of days and years, because life is all too short for it—is that a reason for never beginning? Because, in fine, the promise of heaven depends upon a character which it takes a long time to form, is that holding out a lure to ease and negligence? I know of no doctrine more alarming to the negligent than this; that the Christian virtue, on which the hope of heaven depends, must be the work, not of a moment, but, at the least, of a considerable period of time.

Furthermore; that which is never commenced, can never be done; that which is never begun, can never be accomplished. Be it urged upon every one, then, that he should begin. Be it urged, with most solemn admonition, upon the negligent and delaying. I care not with how much zeal and earnestness he enters upon the work, if he will but remember, that in any given week or month he can only begin. I speak not against a sober and awakened solicitude, against the most solemn convictions, against the most anxious fears, the most serious resolutions, the most earnest and unwearied prayers. It is a work of infinite moment that we have to do. It is an infinite welfare that is at stake. It is as true now as it ever was, that "except a man be born again," born from a sensual to a spiritual life, born from moral indolence and sloth, to sacred effort, and watchfulness, and faith, — born from a worldly to a heavenly hope, he cannot see the kingdom of God. No matter what we call it,—conversion, regeneration, or amendment,—it is the great thing. It is the burden of all religious instruction. Let no one be so absurd or so childish, as to say, that conversion is not preached among us, because the words, "regeneration," "new creation," "born again," are not continually upon our lips. We use these words sparingly, because they are constantly misapprehended. But the thing, — the turning from sin to holiness, the forsaking of all evil ways by repentance, the necessity of being pure, in order to being happy here and hereafter, — what else is our preaching, and your faith? What, but this, is the object of every religious institution, and precept, and doctrine? What, but this, is every dictate of conscience, and every command of God, and every admonition of providence? For what, but this, did Jesus die, and for what else is the spirit of God given? What, but this, in fine, is the interest of life, and the hope of eternity?

My friends, if I can understand any distinctions, the difference between the prevailing ideas of conversion, and those which I now preach to you, is, that the latter are out of all comparison the most solemn, awakening, and alarming. If the work of preparing for heaven could be done in a moment, then might it be done at any moment, at the last moment; and the most negligent might always hope. I cannot conceive of any doctrine more gratifying and quieting to negligence or vice, than this. If, in candour, we were not obliged to think otherwise, it would seem as if it had been invented on purpose to relieve the fears of a guilty, procrastinating conscience. But our doc-

trine, on the contrary, preaches nothing but alarm to a self-indulgent and sinful life. It warns the bad man that the time may come, when, though he may most earnestly desire to prepare for heaven, it will be all too late. It tells him that no work of a moment can save him. As we tell the student preparing for a strict examination, that he must study long before he can be ready; that no momentary struggle or agony will do it; — so we tell him who proposes to be examined as a disciple of Christ, a pupil of Christianity, that the preparation must be the work of years, the work of life. My friends, I beg of you to ponder this comparison. It presents to you the naked truth. He who would rationally hope for heaven, must found that hope, not on the work of moments, but on the work of years; not on any suddenly acquired frame of mind, but on its enduring habit; not on a momentary good resolution, but on its abiding result; not on the beginning of his faith, but on its end, its completion, its perfection.

DISCOURSE III

LUKE xxii. 32: "And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

I AM to discourse, this evening, on the methods of obtaining and of exhibiting religious and virtuous affections. In selecting the text, I do not mean to say that it covers the whole ground of this two-fold subject; but I have chosen it, partly because I wish to connect the first topic before us directly with my last discourse, and because the second topic, the methods of exhibiting religion, is distinctly presented, though not fully embraced by the injunction, "strengthen thy brethren."

Let us now proceed to these topics—how are we to become religious—and how are we to show that we are so. On each of these questions, it is true that a volume might be written; and you will easily infer that I should not have brought them into the same discourse, if I had any other object than to survey them in a single point of view. That point, you are apprised, is the analogy of religion to other subjects, or to other states of mind.

To the question, then, how are we to obtain religious and virtuous affections and habits?—the answer is, just as we obtain any affections and habits, which require attention and effort in order to their acquisition. They ought to be cultivated in childhood, just as the love of nature, or the habit of study, or any other proper affection or state of mind is cultivated. But if they are not; if, as is too often the case, a man grows up an irreligious or vicious man, then the first step towards a change of heart is serious reflection, and the next step is vigorous effort. The man must meditate, and pray, and watch, and strive. There is no other way to become good and pious, than this. There is no easier way.

And this is the point at which I wished to connect the topic under consideration with my last discourse. For it is not only true, that the demand for long-continued effort, for a series of patient endeavours, as the passport to heaven is more strict than the demand for a momentary change; but the practical results of the difference are likely to have the most direct and serious bearing on the question before us. The question is, how is a man to become religious and good? To this question, there are two answers. One is, that a man is to become religious and good by passing through a sudden change,—a change, which, if not miraculous, has no precedent nor parallel in all other human experience. The other answer is, that a man is to become religious and good, just as he is to become wise in learning, or skilful in art, so far as the mode is concerned; that is, by the regular and faithful application of his powers to that end, by the repetition of humble endeavours,

by the slow and patient forming of habits, by little acquisitions made day after day, by continual watchfulness and effort, and the seeking of heavenly aid. In the former case, the thing that a man looks for, is a sudden and extraordinary change in his affections, wrought out by a special influence from above. And although much is to be done afterwards, yet till this is done, nothing is done. Much is to be done afterwards, it is true, as a matter of duty; but nothing more is necessary to make out the title to heaven. There is to be a progressive sanctification as a consequence of the change; but salvation depends on the change itself. Everything turns upon this mysterious point of conversion.

Now, can I be mistaken in thinking, that such a reference to this point must tend to derange the whole system of rational motives? Must it not take off the pressure and urgency of the natural inducements to act? Suppose, to resume the comparison, which I made in the close of my last discourse, that a man has before him a certain study to which he ought to attend. He is, perhaps, to be examined upon it a year hence, and on this examination is to depend his introduction into professional life. And to make the parallel complete, suppose that he is averse to study. He is indolent. He puts off the matter to-day, and to-morrow; one, two, or three weeks pass, and he has done nothing. But all the while the conviction is pressing harder and harder upon him, that this will never do; that he must begin; and at length he does begin, and proceed, and persevere; nay, he comes to like his task; he enjoys his industry more than ever he enjoyed his indolence; he finishes the work, and gains an honourable place in a learned profession. Now, this man was placed under the natural and healthful influence of motives; and it is under such influences, I contend, and through such processes, that a man is to become a Christian. But suppose that this man, the candidate for literary honours, had been looking for some sudden and extraordinary change in his mind, which was to take place, when or how, he could not tell; it might be in the first month, or in the second, or even in the eleventh month of his probation; a change, too, without which nothing could avail him, and with which, all was safe. Does not every one see that the pressure of ordinary motives is nearly taken off? Does not every one see, that a man so circumstanced is very likely to go on, without ever applying himself thoroughly and resolutely to the work in hand?

And what else, I am tempted to ask, is to account for the apathy and neglect of multitudes towards the greatest of all concerns? Do not tell me, my brethren, that you have escaped this error, because you have embraced more rational ideas of conversion. It is an error, I fear, which has infected the religion of the whole world. Almost all men are expecting to become religious and devout in *some extraordinary way;* in a way for which the ordinary changes of character furnish no analogy. This is the fatal barrier of error that surrounds the world, and defends it from the pressure of ordinary motives. Evils and temptations enough, I know there are, *within* that barrier; but if there be anything without it,—if there be anything in the shape of opinion more fatal than everything else to religious attainment, it must be that which interferes with the felt necessity of immediate, urgent, practical, persevering endeavour! The doctrine of sudden conversion, I conceive, is precisely such an

opinion. Let such a doctrine be applied to any other subject than religion, to the attainment of any mental habit, of learning or of art, and I am sure that it would be seen to have this fatal influence. And I fear that it has not only paralysed religious exertion, but that it has the effect to deter many from all approach to religion; that to many, this extraordinary conversion is a mystery, and a wonder, and a fear. I apprehend that by many it is regarded as a crisis, a paroxysm, a fearful initiation into the secrets of religion: and that, in consequence, religion itself is regarded by multitudes, as the mysteries were in ancient times; that is to say, as a matter of which they know nothing, and can know nothing, till they have passed the gate of initiation, till they have learnt the meaning of this solemn pass-word, conversion. Hence it is that vital religion is looked upon by the mass of the community, as a matter with which they have nothing to do; they give it up to the Church, to converts, to the initiated; and that which should press down upon the whole world, like the boundless atmosphere, the religion of the sky, the religion of the universe, the religion of universal truth and all-embracing welfare, has become a flaming sword upon the gates of paradise!

I proceed now to the *exhibition* or manifestation of religion. And the rule here is, that a man should manifest his religious affections no otherwise, than as he manifests any serious, joyful, and earnest affections he may possess. This, I have no doubt, will appear to be the most interesting and effective, as well as the most proper display of them.

Exhibition, manifestation, display on such a subject, are words, I confess, which are not agreeable to me; and on this point, I shall soon speak. That is seldom the most powerful exhibition of character which a man makes on set purpose. And therefore I should say, even if it were contended that religion is a peculiar cause committed to the good man, which he is bound to advocate and advance in the world by peculiar exertions, still that he will not ordinarily so well succeed by direct attempt, as by an indirect influence.

But let us take up, for a few moments, the general subject. We are speaking of religious manifestation; and, I say, that a man's religion is to assume no peculiar appearances, because it is religion. I do not say, *no* appearances appropriate to itself. All traits and forms of character have, to a certain extent, their appropriate disclosures. So far, religion may have them; but, in consistency with good sense, no farther. Our Lord said to Peter, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." A good man should strengthen his brethren; but, in order to do this to the best purpose, he is to strengthen his brethren in religion, no otherwise than he would strengthen his brethren in patriotism, in learning, or in any other cause. That is to say, he is to be governed by the general and just principles of mutual influence. He is to give his countenance, his sympathy, his counsel, on proper occasions; but he is not to go about exhorting at all corners, assuming an air of superiority, speaking in oracular and sepulchral tones; if he does so, he will be liable to be considered intrusive, impertinent, and disagreeable. I would speak with a sacred caution on this point. I would quench no holy fire. Our fault is too liable to be reserve. And well can I conceive that there may be times, when a man may fitly and solemnly say, "Stand fast, my brother, keep thine integrity;" or emergencies of social temptation,

when the zealous Christian may say, "Let us strengthen each other's hands, and encourage each other's hearts in the holy cause of duty." The same thing may be done in every other cause, whether of justice or humanity. All that I contend for is, that the same good sense, the same courtesy, the same liberality, shall govern a man in one case, as in the other.

Undoubtedly, a religious and good man will appear on many occasions differently from another man, and differently, in proportion as he is religious and good. But he will not appear so *always*, nor in things indifferent. There may be nothing to distinguish him in his gait, his countenance, or demeanour. Still there will be occasions, when his character will come out;—many occasions. His actions, his course of life, his sentiments, on a great many occasions, will show his character. And these sentiments he will express in conversation; so that his *conversation* will be thus far different. But still the disclosures of his character will all be natural. He will show you that he is interested in religion, just as he shows you that he is interested about everything else, by natural expressions of countenance, and tones of voice, by natural topics of conversation, and habits of conduct. In short, there will be an appropriate exhibition of religious character, but nothing singular or strange.

Now, for multitudes of persons, this will not do; it is not enough. They want something peculiar. There are many, indeed, who are not satisfied, unless there is something peculiar in the looks and manners of a man to mark him out as religious. Who does not know how constantly a clergyman has been, and still is, to a great extent, known, everywhere, by these marks? And what is more common, than for the new convert to put on a countenance and deportment, which causes all his acquaintances to say, "how strangely he appears!" And many, I repeat, would have it so. They would have a man not only belong to the kingdom of Christ, but carry also some peculiar marks and badges of it. They would have him wear his religion as a military costume, that they may know, as they say, under what colours he fights. But let us remember, that many a coward has worn a coat of mail, and many a brave man has felt that he did not need one. And many a bad man, I would rather say many a misguided man, has put on a solemn countenance, and carried a stiff and formal gait, and got all the vocabulary of cant by heart; and many a good man has felt that he could do without these trappings of a mistaken and erring piety. Nor let it be forgotten, that just in proportion as this peculiarity of religious manifestation prevails, hypocrisy prevails. It is easier to put on a costume, than it is to adopt a real character. Religion, for its own defence against pretenders, as well as for its usefulness in the world, should demand sobriety, simplicity, naturalness, and truth of behaviour, from all its votaries.

I do not mean, in saying this, to confound sanctimony with hypocrisy, or bad taste with bad morals. The same distinctions apply to this, as to every other subject. A man of real learning *may* be a pedant. A man of real skill may lack the simplicity which is its highest ornament. A really able statesman may practise some finesse. A truly wise man may put on an air of unnecessary gravity, or be something too much a man of forms. But we all agree that these are faults. We always desire that all unnecessary peculiarities should be laid aside, that no

man should obtrude upon others his gifts or qualifications; that he should leave them to speak when they are called for. In other words, we demand good breeding in every other case; and I say emphatically, that good breeding is equally to be demanded in religion. No man is the worse Christian for being a well-bred man; nor is he, for that reason, the less decided Christian.

Next to the general manners as modes of exhibiting religion, a more specific point to be considered is religious conversation. A man usually talks, it is said, about that which is nearest his heart; and a religious man, therefore, will talk about religion. Every observing person, we may notice in passing, must be aware that there are many exceptions to this remark—that there are not a few individuals in the circle of his acquaintance, who are not, by any means, communicative on the subjects that most deeply interest them. But there is a still more important distinction in regard to the subject-matter itself.

It is this. A man may talk religiously, and yet not talk about religion, as an abstract subject. A good and devout man will show that he is such by his conversation; but not necessarily by his conversing upon the abstract subjects of devotion and goodness. He will show it by the spirit of his conversation, by the cast and tone of his sentiments, on a great many subjects. You will see, as he talks about men and things, about life and its objects, its cares, disappointments, afflictions, and blessings, about its end, and its future prospects—you will see that his mind is right, that his affections are pure, that his aspirations are spiritual. You will see this, not by any particular phraseology he uses, not because he has set himself to talk in any particular manner, not because he intended you should see it, but simply because conversation *is* ordinarily and naturally an expression and index of the character. I am not denying that a good man may talk about religion as an abstract subject, or about religious experience as the express subject. All may do this, at times; some, from the habit of their minds, may do it often. But what I say is, that this, with most men, is not necessarily nor naturally the way of showing an interest in religion.

And to prove this, we need only ask how men express, by conversation, their interest in other subjects; how they exhibit other parts of their character, through this medium—this breathing out of the soul in words. A man talks affectionately or feelingly; you see that this is the tone of his mind; you say that he is a person of great sensibility; but does he talk about affection, or feeling, or sensibility, in the abstract? A man talks intelligently; but does he talk about intelligence? Or is it necessary that he should discourse a great deal about good sense, or be perpetually saying what a fine thing knowledge is, in order to convince you that he is an intelligent man? Here is a circle of persons, distinguished for the strength of their family and friendly attachments. All their actions and words show that kindness and harmony dwell among them. But now, what would you think, if they should often sit down and talk in set terms, about the beauty of friendship, or the charms of domestic love? So strange and unnatural would it be, that you would be inclined to suspect their sincerity. You might, indeed, fairly infer one of two things; either that love and friendship with them were matters of mere and cold sentiment, or that these persons had utterly mistaken the natural and proper method of exhibiting their affections.

But there is another kind of religious conversation, which, beyond all others, is thought to furnish the clearest evidence of a man's piety; and that is, his conversing much with thoughtless or unregenerate persons, *with a view to making them religious*. Now here, we are to keep in view the same distinction that is applied to religion in general. A religious man may well desire to make others religious by his conversation. He may, on proper occasions, converse with them for this very end. But to do this, he need not talk about religion in the abstract, nor expressly about the religious good of the persons he converses with. There may, indeed, be times and relations, in which this personal appeal should be made; but it should not be done as a matter of course and of set form. A man may impress his acquaintances in this way, I know. He may make them feel strangely and uncomfortably. He may create in them a sort of preternatural feeling. He may awaken, terrify, distress them. He may, then, by such means, make an impression upon them; but it will not be a good impression. It is planting in the mind the seeds of superstition, which a whole life, often, is not sufficient to eradicate. It is through this process, that religion is, with so many persons, a strange, uncongenial, terrifying, distressful, gloomy thing, to their dying day. Why is it not apparent to every one, that this method of proceeding is unnatural, unwise, inexpedient! It is not with religion that men are impressed in this case, so much as with the manner in which it is presented, with its aspects and adjuncts. And there is reason to fear, that with many, religion itself becomes a thing of aspects and circumstances, rather than of the spirit; that it becomes, in its possessor, a peculiarity, rather than a character; a posture, and often a distorted posture of mind and feeling, rather than the mind and feeling itself. Men are not *accustomed* to talk about abstract subjects, nor about the soul, as an abstract subject. And if you approach them—awkwardly, as you must do in such a case—and put such questions as, "Whether they have obtained religion," or, "What is the state of their souls," they will hardly know what to do with such treatment; they will not know how to commune with you. They may, indeed, if they have a great respect for you, sit down, and listen to the awful communication, and be impressed and overcome by it. But is this the way to exert a favourable and useful influence upon them? Do but consider if this is the way in which men are favourably and usefully impressed on other subjects. A man has a quarrel with his neighbour. You wish to dispose him to peace and reconciliation. Do you begin with asking him what is the state of his soul? Do you ask him whether he has obtained peace? Do you begin to talk with him about the abstract *doctrines* of peace and forgiveness? Let a sensible man be seen communing with his neighbour in a case like this, and he will be found to adopt a far more easy, unembarrassed, and natural mode of communication. And, in any case, whether you propose to enlighten the ignorant, to quicken the indolent, or to restrain the passionate, every one must know, that a course would be pursued, very different from that which is usually resorted to, for recommending religion.

I have now spoken of the general manners, and of conversation in particular, as modes of exhibiting religion.

But on the general subject of *exhibiting religion*, I have one observation to offer in close. I have spoken, in this discourse, of exhibiting or

manifesting religion, because I could find no other brief and comprehensive phrase which would convey the idea; but I am afraid that these phrases themselves, are liable to carry with them an erroneous idea. If a man of high intelligence or cultivated taste should think much of exhibiting his intelligence or taste, we should say that he is not very wisely employed. He might, indeed, very properly think of it, if he had fallen into any great faults on this point; and it is for this reason that we have desired the religious man to do this. But, after all, exhibition is not the thing. And the observation, therefore, which I have to make, is this: that the more a man thinks of cultivating religion, and the less he thinks of exhibiting it, the more happy will he be in himself, and the more useful to others. That which is within us, it has been said, "will out." Let a man possess the spirit of religion, and it will probably, in some way or other, manifest itself. He need not be anxious on that point. On the contrary, there are no persons who are more disagreeable; there are scarcely any who do a greater disservice to the cause of virtue, than *pattern* men and women. Hence it is that you often hear it said, "We cannot endure perfect people." The assumption, the consciousness of virtue, is the most fatal blight upon all its charms. Good examples are good things; but their goodness is gone the moment they are adopted for their own sake. A noble action performed for example's sake, is a contradiction in terms. Let it be performed in total unconsciousness of anything but the action itself, and then, and then only, is it clothed with power and beauty.

I do not mean to dissuade any good man from acting and speaking for the religious enlightenment and edification of others; I advocate it; but that is effort, not exhibition. Yet even then, I would say, let no man's religious action or speech go beyond the impulses of his heart. Let no man be more religious in his conversation, than he is in his character. The worst speculative evils in the popular mind about religion, I fear, are the mingled sense of its unreality, on the one hand, and of its burthensomeness on the other, which spring from the artificial treatment it has received from its professed votaries. Away with set phrases, and common-places, and monotones, and drawlings, and all solemn dulness! — and let us have truth, simplicity, and power. The heart of the world will answer to that call, even as the forests answer and bend to the free winds of heaven; while amidst the fogs and vapours that rise from stagnant waters, it stands motionless, chilled, and desolate.

DISCOURSE IV.

LUKE xvi. 8: "For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

I AM to speak in this discourse of the causes of indifference and aversion to religion, and my special purpose, in pursuance of the analogy which I am following out in these discussions is, to inquire, whether the same causes would not make men indifferent or averse to any other subject, however naturally agreeable or interesting to them. Let philosophy, or friendship, or native sensibility; let study, or business, or pleasure even, be inculcated and treated as religion has been, and would not men be averse to them?

It is possible that I have a hearer who will think that he solves the problem by saying, that men's aversion to religion is owing to the wickedness of their hearts. That would be to solve a problem with a truism. The aversion to religion is wickedness of heart. I am sensible, and it will be more apparent as we proceed, that this is to be said with important qualifications. But still it is true that this state of mind is wrong. And the question is, Why does this state of mind exist? In other words, from whence is this aversion to religion? It may be said, with more pertinence I allow, that the cause is to be found in the depravity of human nature. This *is*, indeed, assigning a cause. And it is, moreover, bringing the subject to a point, on which I wish to fix your attention. For, so far from admitting this to be true, I think it will be easy to show that men may be made, and are made, indifferent or averse to worldly objects, to objects allowed to be congenial to their nature, by the same causes which make them indifferent or averse to heavenly objects, — the objects of faith and duty.

I. The first cause which I shall mention is *neglect*. There are many sciences, and arts, and accomplishments, which are most interesting, and naturally most interesting to those who cultivate them, but entirely indifferent to those who neglect them. We see this every day. We find different men in the opposite poles of enthusiasm and apathy, on certain subjects; and the reason is, that some have been familiar with them, and others have been completely estranged from them. The most interesting and fascinating reading has no attraction for those who have passed the most of their lives without ever taking up a book. It is, in short, a well-known law of our minds, that attention is necessary to give vividness and interest to objects of human thought.

The first cause of indifference to religion, then, is neglect. It may be said that all are taught; that the subject is constantly urged upon their attention from the pulpit. But the example and daily conver-

sation of their parents and friends, who have showed no interest in religion, have been more powerful far than the words of the preacher. The real and effective influences of their education have all tended to neglect. The actual course of their conduct has come to the same thing. They have never attended to religion, either as the merchant attends to business, or as the farmer attends to soils, or the mechanician to his art, or—to come nearer to the point—as the student attends to philosophy, or as the virtuoso to matters of taste, or even as the sketching traveller attends to scenery, or as the man of pleasure to amusement; or, in fine, as any man attends to anything in which he would be interested. It is not in this way, at all, that they have thought of being religious, but in some more summary, in some extraordinary way: and multitudes, who would think it preposterous to expect to be interested in a literature or language, of which they have never read anything, have never in their lives attentively read one book about religion, not even the Bible.

I am quite sensible, while I make these comparisons, that there is a general attention to religion, more important than any specific study of it: an attention, that is to say, to the monitions of conscience, to experience, to the intimations of a providence all around us, to the great example of Christ that ever shines as a light before us. But it is this very attention, as well as the specific study, in which men have been deficient. And then, as to the specific study, I say, it is to be advocated on grounds similar to those which recommend it in every other case. A man may be religious without reading books, I know. So may he be an agriculturalist or mechanician without reading books. But the point to be stated, for him who reads at all, is, that he will read on the subject on which he wishes to be informed and interested; and so we may say, that he who studies at all, will study on the subject that is nearest his heart; and that he who adopts forms and usages in any case, will avail himself of forms and usages in this. So that he, into whose life no specific religious action enters, gives no evidence of general attention.

Still, then, I repeat, there must be attention, both general and particular. No man can reasonably expect to be religious without it. It is not enough passively to be borne on with the wave of worldly fashion, now setting towards the church, and now towards the exchange, and now towards the theatre. It is not enough to be as religious as chance, and time, and tide will make us. There must be a distinct, direct religious action, a hand stretched out, an eye looking beyond, a heart breathing its sighs and secret prayers for some better thing. But with multitudes this distinct action of the soul has never been put forth. And it is no more surprising that they are not Christians, than it is that they are not astronomers or artists.

II. The next cause of indifference and aversion to religion is to be found in the character, with which some of its most attractive virtues are commonly invested. Let us consider a few of these, and compare them with other affections and sentiments.

One of the Christian virtues, much insisted on, is *love of the brethren*. The analagous sentiment is friendship. Now I ask, would friendship be the attractive quality that it is, if it were inculcated and represented in the same way as love of the brethren? If friendship were constantly

insisted on, as a test of character, as the trying point on which all future hopes rest; if a man were constantly asked whether he loves his friends, in the same way in which he is asked whether he loves the brethren, and thus were made to tremble when that question is asked; if, then, the affection of friendship were required to be exercised with so little reference to all the natural charms and winning graces of character; if, again, friendship must find its objects within a sphere so limited, among men of a particular sect, or among church-members only, or among speculative believers of a certain cast; and if, moreover, friendship were to express itself by such methods as brotherly love usually does, by set and precise manners, by peculiar actions, by talking of its elect and chosen ones, as Christians have been wont to talk of each other: if, I say, all this belonged to friendship, do you think it would wear to men's eyes the charm and fascination that it now does? Would they rush to its arms — would they seek it and sigh for it as they now do? No; friendship itself would lose its grace and beauty, if it were set forth as the love of the brethren usually is. No wonder that men are averse to such an affection. But would they have been equally averse to it, if it had been represented as but a holier friendship; the friendship of good men — which it is, and which is all that it is?

Again; hope is a Christian virtue. It is also natural affection; and as a natural affection, it attracts every human heart. It "springs eternal" and irresistible in every human breast. Its eye kindles, and its countenance glows, as it gazes upon the bright future. But would it be this involuntary and welcome affection, if it bore the character that evangelical hope has assumed in the experience of modern Christians? I say of modern Christians; for the ancient hope was a different thing. It was the hope of those "who sat in the region and shadow of death," that they should live hereafter: it was a hope full of immortality; full of the sublimity and joy of that great expectation. But now, what is the modern feeling that bears this name, and how does it express itself? It says with anxiety, and often with a mournful sigh, "I hope that I am a Christian,—I hope that I am pardoned,—I hope that I shall go to heaven." Would any human hope be attractive, if this were its character? Is it strange that men do not desire to entertain a hope that is so expressed?

Once more; faith holds a prominent place among the Christian virtues. In its natural form, it is one of the most grateful of all affections. Confidence — confidence in our friend — what earthly repose is equal to this? The faith of a child in its parent — how simple, natural, irresistible! And how perfectly intelligible is all this! But now do you throw one shade of mystery over this affection; require it to assent to abstruse and unintelligible doctrines; require of it a metaphysical accuracy; demand it, not as the natural, but as some technical or mystical condition of parental favour; resolve all this into some peculiar and ill-understood connexion with the laws of the divine government; and the friend, the child would shrink from it; he would forego the natural affections of his heart, if they must be bound up with things so repulsive and chilling to all its confiding and joyous sensibilities.

I may observe here, that these three virtues — brotherly love, hope, and faith — derived from the circumstances of the early age a prominence and a peculiarity, which ought since to have passed away.

When the Christians were a comparatively small and persecuted band, and had a great cause committed to their fidelity, it was natural and proper that the tie between them should be peculiar. Hence their letters to one another were constantly filled with such expressions as, "saluto the brethren," "greet the brethren." Those brethren were perhaps, one hundred or five hundred persons in a city; known and marked adherents of the new faith—who met together in dark retreats, in old ruins, in caves or catacombs. But all this has passed away. And now it would be absurd for a man, however affectionately and religiously disposed, in writing letters to any town or city, to send salutations and greetings to all the good people in those places. Christians now stand in the general relation to one another of good men; not of fellow sufferers, not of fellow-champions of a persecuted cause. It is precisely the difference between compatriots fighting for their liberty, and fellow-citizens quietly enjoying it.

In like manner, Christian faith, when it was necessarily the first step in religion, when it came to fill the void of scepticism; and Christian hope, when it sprung from the dark cloud of despair, both derived from the circumstances a singular character and a signal importance. And the circumstances justified a peculiar manner of speaking about them. Hope was indeed a glorious badge of distinction in a world without hope: and faith was, indeed, a pledge for the highest virtue, when it might cost its possessor his life. But now to speak of faith and hope with a certain mysterious sense of their importance, is to present them in a false garb; it is to clothe, with an ancient and strange costume, things that ought to be familiar; and it is therefore to cut them off from our natural sympathy and attachment.

III. The third cause of indifference and aversion to religion, and the last which I shall mention, but on which I shall dwell at greater length than I have upon the former, is to be found in the mode of its inculcation.

To show that men may be made averse to objects naturally and confessedly interesting to them, by an unfortunate teaching, and to point out the manner of that teaching, I shall draw two illustrations from the pursuit of knowledge.

It will not be denied, that for knowledge in general, the human mind has a natural aptitude and desire. But do the children, in the most of our schools, love the knowledge that is inculcated there? Have they associated agreeable ideas with their class-books and school-rooms, and with the time they pass in them? What is the occasion of this insufferable tediousness that so many of them experience, in the pursuits of elementary learning? How is it, that they so often find the form on which they sit, an almost literal rack of torture, and the hours of confinement lengthening out like the hours of bondage? Do we talk of men's aversion to religion? Why, here is aversion to knowledge, as strong and obstinate as that of hardened vice itself to religion. What causes it? Not that nature, which was as truly made to love knowledge, as appetite to love food; but circumstances have disappointed the natural want, till it is perverted and stupified, so that it scarcely appears to belong to the nature of the human being. Again: the science of astronomy is held, by all who understand it, to be a most interesting—an almost enchanting science. No one can doubt that, if properly introduced to

the mind, it would prove extremely attractive and delightful. Nor let it be said, to destroy the parallel which I am exhibiting, that knowledge has no natural obstacles in the mind to contend with, while religion has many. Religion finds obstructions, indeed, in human nature, but so also has knowledge to contend with the love of ease, with sloth, with physical dulness, with pleasure, and worldly vanity.

Now suppose that the teacher of astronomy comes forward to instruct his pupil; and that he at once adopts a very unusual, very formal, and repulsive manner; that he tells him with reiterated assurance that he *must* learn this science, and yet fails to show any very perceptible connexion it has with his interest, his dignity, or happiness. Suppose further, that the teacher informs his pupil, that he has the strongest natural aversion to the science in question; that this aversion is so strong as to amount to an actual inability to comprehend it; that it is absolutely certain that he never will learn it of himself; that his only chance of success lies in the interposition of divine power; that all his exertions to learn, give him no claim to understand what he is inquiring after; that if he succeeds, it will be no merit of his, and that if he fails he will be utterly ruined, and for ever miserable, and will richly deserve to be so. Suppose, I say, all these influences to attach themselves to one of the most beautiful sciences ever commended to the human mind; suppose all the stronger instructions, the fearful agitations, the tremendous excitements of hope and fear, the unnatural postures of mind, the violence to reason, the mocking of effort, the mysteries of faith, and the extravagancies of conduct, that must arise from so extraordinary an intellectual condition of things; and do you believe that any object or pursuit would be likely to be loved in such circumstances? Would you say, in such a case, that the science in question had any fair chance or trial?

But let us now come to the direct teaching of religion itself. What are the causes that prevent its grateful and hearty acceptance? What are the causes, I mean, which exist in the teaching itself; for I am not at present concerned with those which exist in the perverseness of the human will. To this question, I shall answer, that the teaching is apt to be too formal, too direct, and too abstract.

First, it is apt to be too formal. The parent, the teacher, the friend, does not neglect the subject, perhaps, nor does he misconceive it; his views are rational and just; he sees what religion is, and would teach it; but how does he teach it? Himself, perhaps, possessing but little of holy familiarity with its objects, he speaks to his child or his pupil, with a constrained manner; speaks, as if he were set to do it, and as if it were a task. He feels the duty of imbuing with religious sentiment the mind that is committed to him, but the gentle and holy voice is not in his own heart, and without intending it, he adopts an artificial tone. He speaks on this subject as he speaks on no other. His words want all the winning grace and charm of natural sensibility. In short, he is a formalist in religion, and a formalist in teaching it. Formal as all other kinds of education have been, none has been so dreadfully smitten with this taint, as catechising, and the inculcation of Bible lessons, and the teaching of prayers, and talking of God.

Now, everything unnatural in manner is repulsive to us. It is scarce speaking too strongly, to say, that we hate it. We fly from it when we

are children; we revolt from it when we are men. There is nothing in social manners that is more intolerable than affectation. But especially, I think, is it the instinct of children to shrink from everything formal in manner. Their minds put forth every power of resistance to it, as their limbs would resist the compression of some torturing instrument. Might religion but have come forth from all its artificial peculiarities, and forms of singularity, and fetters of restraint; might it have talked with us as other things talk with us; might it only have won us, as kindness, friendship, love win us; how different would now have been the state of religious sentiment and affection, in the hearts of thousands around us!

I am speaking of direct influences; and I now add, that they may be too direct for the best impression. Perhaps, indeed, it is one of the inevitable errors of the formalist, to make them so. He, who is not heartily and wholly interested in religion, will be very apt to make the inculcation of it a set business; and then it certainly *will* be too direct. It will take the form of direct command, and say, "You must do this or that; you must love God!" rather than express itself in easy and unrestrained and unpremeditated conversation. I am inclined, indeed, to say that, in general, the strongest feelings choose indirect modes of manifestation. I remember once to have heard of a prayer on a very affecting occasion, and where the speaker was most of all interested, in which it was said, that every word bore reference to the occasion, and yet the occasion was never once directly alluded to. I confess that that appeared to me, as the very highest description that could be given of delicate and strong sensibility. It is not necessary to be direct in order to be impressive; the very contrary is more apt to be true. And he who can think of no way to impress religion, but broad, open-mouthed, and urgent exhortation or entreaty, understands neither religion nor human nature.

The common faults of parents certainly is, to do too little; but there are ways in which they may do too much. I have often thought that nothing can be worse, than to be always pointing out *the moral of a story* to children. They do it for themselves; and for another to do it for them, after they have done it, is often felt by them to be degrading and irritating. I think that some of the worst children and young people that I have ever known, are those, into whose ears moralities and fine sentiments have been for ever dinned with wearisome repetition and minuteness. This accounts for the false maxim which you sometimes hear, that the best parents often have the worst children. Such parents, I know, are often what are called very good people, very exemplary persons; extremely anxious, they are said to be, for the improvement of their children; and so they are in a sense; and yet I have been sometimes tempted to say, that heartless, formal, wearisome domestic lecturers on religion and virtue, do more hurt than any people in the world. The worst and most abandoned of men make *vice* odious; *they* make *virtue* so. And the feelings of the children, bad and insensible as they are apt to become, do really evince, though unhappily, the dignity of human nature; they show that virtue was not designed to be poured into the ear in dinning precepts or dull complaints, but to be the offspring of an inward energy, self-wrought, self-chosen; influenced, indeed, by arguments from without, but drawing its own inference,

bringing out, from communion with itself and with the spirit of God, its own free and glorious result.

I shall not be thought, certainly, in these remarks, to oppose the religious education of children. I am speaking of the form of teaching, and not of the fact. The only question is about the best mode; and into this, I maintain, that less of direct inculcation and more of indirect influence, should enter, than is common. Nay, I maintain that the stern and solemn enforcement of lessons and readings has effectually alienated many from religion. It was the manner, I repeat, rather than the act. The Bible may certainly be taught, and catechisms may be taught in the form of direct lessons; they may be successfully taught, if the manner be easy and kindly; and, I think, that Sunday Schools, where a large company of children are brought together, and the free and joyous spirit of childhood pervades the place, are likely to give freedom and ease to the manner of teaching. Religious teaching is thus becoming like common school teaching, and on this account, is doubtless exposed to some dangers; but it is likely to have the advantage of throwing off the usual manner of direct, peculiar, superstitious appeal to the heart, singling out its object, and fixing upon it the eye of authority and warning. So important and critical is this point *of manner*, that a visible and painful anxiety to have a child excel in anything, even in virtue, does not appear to me to be wise; to urge even this, by constant hints and exhortations, and especially with an air of dissatisfaction and complaint, is not expedient. The human affections are not to be won in this way. They are not so won to other objects; why should we expect them by such means to be attracted to religion.

Finally, as we teach religion too formally, and often too directly, so do I think that we teach it too abstractly. There is one particular affection on which I shall bring this observation to bear, and that is the love we should cherish towards our Creator. To this sentiment, I allow that there are some natural obstacles. They are found in the invisibility and infinity of the divine nature. These obstacles, I think, however, are exaggerated; and they are, by no means, so great as those which are created by our own mistakes.

When children are acquiring their first ideas of God and of their duty to him, I apprehend that many things are taught and told them, which, although true and right in themselves, are inculcated too abstractly; that is, too little with reference to the minds that are to receive them. The parent teaches his child, as the first thing, perhaps, that God *sees* him continually, in the darkness and in the light; and the thought of that awful eye fixed upon him distresses and frightens him. Or the child is taught with too little explanation, that God is displeased, is angry with him, when he does wrong; and how little does he understand the considerate and compassionate displeasure of his Creator! Or he is taught to pray, and obliged to go through with that formal action, without its being made a sufficiently sincere, grateful, and real homage. And he is especially taught all this on Sunday. Sunday, he is told, is the Lord's day. And it is made to him, perhaps, the most disagreeable day in the week. Alas! how far does the experience of those tedious hours, penetrate into his life, and into the whole religious complexion of his being! How often is that hurtful influence reasoned

away, and how often does it come back again, and disturb, perhaps, the most rational Christian, even on his dying bed!

The first idea, it should be remembered, which a child can gain at all, of moral qualities, is from the experience of his own heart. That is the undoubted, and now conceded philosophical truth. *There*, then, should begin the child's idea of God. From the love within him, he should be taught that God loves all beings. And so, from the moral approbation or displeasure he feels in himself, he should be taught how God approves the good and condemns the bad. Next, his parent should be to him the image of God; and from his love of that parent, and from all that parent has done for him, he should be led to consider how easy, and how reasonable it is, that he should love God. God should be made a present being to him, near and kind, and not the image of a being, a monarch or a master, seated on a throne, in the far distant heavens.

The common method of teaching, I fear, instead of this, is extremely artificial, technical, and constrained, and very little adapted to make any clear or agreeable impression. And I am persuaded, that the same method adopted in regard to an earthly parent, would powerfully tend to repress the filial sentiment towards him.

Let me dwell upon the comparison a moment, and with a view to illustrate the three faults of inculcation on which I have now been insisting. In order to make the cases, as far as may be, parallel, we must suppose the parent to be absent from his child—absent, let it be imagined, in a foreign country, and his child has never seen him. And now my supposition proceeds.

The child is told of this parent. But how told? I will suppose it to be, with a manner always strange and constrained, with a countenance mysterious and forbidding, with a tone unusual and awful. Instead of being taught to lisp amidst his innocent prattlings, the name of *father*, to speak of that name as if there were a charm about it, to associate with the idea of that father, all brightness, benignity, and love; instead of all this ease, simplicity, and tenderness, he is called away from his sports and pleasures, is made to stand erect and attentive, and then he is told of this father. He is told, indeed, that his father is good and loves him; but the words fall lightly on his ear; they make little or no impression on his mind, while the manner, the countenance, the tone, sink into his heart, and tell him far more effectually, that there is something strange and stern about this father, and that he cannot love such a being. Yet this is the very thing on which the main stress is laid. He is told that he must love his parent. He is constantly urged and commanded to love him. He is warned continually that his father will be very much displeased, if he does not love him. He is admonished that all the good things he enjoys were sent to him by his father; and he is exhorted to be grateful. Besides, he is shown a book—a fearful book—of laws, which this parent has written for him to obey. And to complete this system of influences, he has it continually held up before him, that, ere long, his father will send for him, and if he should find a defect of duty, gratitude, and love, he will cast him into a dismal prison, where he will be doomed to pass his whole remaining life in misery and despair!

I need not point out the moral of this comparison. Alas! how many *extraneous* causes have there been to sever the heart from its great na-

tive trust; the trust in an Infinite Parent! I say not this, to reproach any man, or any body of men. In this matter, I fear that we have all gone out of the way. I lament the defects of every kind of religious education and influence with which I am acquainted, and am persuaded that they have done much to spread around us the prevailing indifference and aversion to the most vital and vast of all concerns. I do not reproach my religious brethren then, who, with myself, I ought to believe, have meant well and erred in honesty, and whose attention I would invite, as I have given my own, to a serious consideration of this subject.

But I cannot leave the subject, without addressing one emphatic remonstrance to those with whom religion is a matter of indifference or dislike. I entreat such to distrust the influences under which they have come to that result. I am sure that I have said enough to show them, that any subject would have failed to interest them under the same influences—the influences of neglect, of misconception, and of mistaken treatment. It is not the bright and glorious truth of heaven that is in fault. It is not your own nature that is in fault. It is not the beneficence of God that has been wanting to you. But human error has been flowing in all the streams of life around you; and an erring heart within has too easily suffered petrefaction and death to steal into all its recesses. Oh! let a new life be breathed there; and you shall find that religion is no form, no irksome restraint, no dull compliance with duty merely, but spirit—but freedom—but life indeed; life to your heart—the beginning of a higher life—of the life everlasting!

ON LIBERALITY AND STRICTNESS.

GALATIONS v. 13: "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."

HERE, it would seem, in terms at least, is something like contradiction. In the first place, the apostle says, "Ye have been called unto liberty," and yet he adds in the same sentence, "but by love serve one another." This might easily be shown, however, to be but one instance of a general principle; and of a principle which distinguishes true Christianity from all the corruptions of it, and from all false religions of whatever name. This is the principle of consistency or harmony in character. Christianity, as well as the character of its Founder, is distinguished by inculcating not one virtue or another, to the exclusion of the rest, not by permitting any virtue to go to excess, but by the union and mutual control of opposite virtues. Such are fear and hope, meekness and courage, zeal and moderation, earnestness and calmness, gentleness and inflexibility, liberality and strictness.

The same apparent paradox that is contained in our text, we often meet with in reading the New Testament. When I am weak, then am I strong, says the apostle. And again, "Blessed are they that mourn; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; having nothing, yet possessing all things." So in the following passage: "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, rejoice. Let your *moderation* be known to all men."

Our text speaks of being free, and yet serving one another. This, we may observe, is the true doctrine with regard to civil liberty. This liberty, truly held, is not a boasting and blustering, nor a proud and self-sufficient, nor a reckless and licentious principle. It was not with such a spirit that our own independence was wrought out. I do not believe there ever were men who had a stricter regard to human rights, who were more cautious and prudent, who felt more deeply the trust they had taken upon themselves, who were more truly the servants of their country and mankind, than the free and noble spirits, that meditated and achieved the work of our national independence. Look at the body of men that framed and sealed the charter of our liberties. From the moment that they adopted this great declaration of rights, they were free. But did they then resign themselves to indulgence, and softness, and sloth? No; from that moment they were more devoted to their country, more ready to serve one another, more assiduous and anxious, more burdened with a sense of responsibility, than ever. From that moment they acted like men who had pledged "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honour." This case, I

conceive, may illustrate that view of religion, which I wish to explain and defend in the following discourse. These men, prudent, wise, great, and excellent as we know they were, in the eyes of their adversaries, were rash, rebellious, reckless of consequences, throwing off lawful allegiance, and plunging into anarchy and ruin. Long did the opposers of freedom wait for their halting, long have they waited to see the terrible results which they confidently predicted, and yet do these United States stand forth a practical refutation of their prophecies and protestations.

So it is, and so I confidently believe it will be, in religious matters. It has fallen to the lot of religious liberty to meet with the same misrepresentations and the same misplaced admonitions, and it will, I doubt not, fall to the lot of its adversaries to meet with the same refutation.

The comparison holds, too, in another respect. Very likely there were, and are, among a free people, those who abuse their liberty, those who did not, and do not, perceive that the most free should be the most active, watchful, and guarded in the work of preserving their liberties; who did not, and do not, perceive that they who govern themselves must be the most faithful, conscientious, and strict of all men. And, very likely all this may apply to some persons in those communities, that are most liberal and free in their religious sentiments.

You see, therefore, that I have a two-fold object in view;—to defend liberal principles in religion, and to guard them from perversion. Indeed, I cannot help thinking that there is a great deal of language relating to this subject, among ourselves, which is either wrong, or wrongly understood.

For instance; I hear it said of a man that he is simplifying and spiritualizing religion too much. Now to this I would say, no; he is doing it on a wrong principle. Strictly speaking, there cannot be too much simplifying and spiritualizing of religion. The language, I believe, is wrong; and I will hereafter undertake to show why. Again; it is often said of one party in religion, that it is liberal, and of another, that it is strict. With regard to this language, I should say, it is true in a certain sense, and yet very liable to be wrongly and injuriously understood.

And the doctrine, which, for counteraction of these and some other mistakes, I assert, and maintain, to be accordant with the proper nature of things, and the true principles of Christianity, is this: that true liberty in religion is naturally connected with moderation, sobriety, self-control, and with the most intense devotion to the interests of others; that true simplicity with regard to forms, implies the justest veneration for all the useful institutions of piety and virtue; and true liberality the most thorough strictness of conscience. You will not doubt that, according to the principles of Christianity, the meekest man is the most courageous, the holiest is the most humble, the most merciful man is truly the most just. So it is in regard to the cases which I have before stated. There is a perfect harmony in the qualities of a good character. They are all branches of one tree. There is no conflict in the attributes of true religion. In the strictest and highest sense, goodness is severe, and severity is good, mercy is just, and justice is merciful, gentleness is inflexible, and inflexibility is gentle. It

is true, indeed that this harmony is not always found in the imperfect characters of men, but this is what Christianity requires.

Let us now apply this general principle to some of the particulars before stated.

And first, let us refer to the case stated in the text—the subject, in other words, of Christian liberty. Does this imply licentiousness, or a reckless disregard of the feelings or interests of others? Is the freedom of the Christian a principle of disorder, vice, or selfishness? It is enough to ask this question. It needs no answer. Surely freedom of conscience, the free toleration of all honest opinions, the permission to every man to judge for himself (as abstract doctrines, I say), surely these do not bear an unfriendly aspect towards human interests. Neither are they licentious doctrines. This, indeed, was the great cry at the Reformation, and whenever and wherever, since that time, the cause of Christian liberty has been advocated. But what is the fact? Have men grown more vicious as they have grown more free in sentiment? Is the Protestant portion of Christendom the most corrupt part? It is enough, I say again, to ask this question. It is enough to refer to Spain, and Italy, and Russia, on the one hand, and to England, Germany, and North America on the other. Where is the Sabbath most strictly observed? Where have commenced the great moral reforms that signalize the present age? And where is the heaviest hand of restraint laid upon all the vices? It is in this freest country in the world!

This, moreover, is not the adventitious, but the natural result of the principles in question. The man who thinks for himself will not only be more intelligent, which is something to the purpose, but he will naturally be more solicitous and careful, than the man who suffers another to think for him, and to prescribe to him what he shall believe. The blind votary of an established creed or church, for instance, has nothing to do but to believe. He may be as dull and dead as a stock or a stone, which the artificer frames and fits into the temple. Or if he rises one grade above this to some slight degree of intellectual life and action, still the action in him is liable to be slavishly directed to one point; the struggle in him is to believe; the very principle of action in him is a slavish dread, and the dread all tends to the same point—it is a dread lest he should disbelieve. But the man who is free to think for himself, feels that he is put upon his own responsibility. If he errs, it is his own fault. He is more anxious, therefore lest he should err.

He is anxious to know the truth. He girds up the loins of his mind, and is sober. He has come to the manhood of reason, and he puts on the sobriety of manhood. As the youth, when quitting the parental watch and care, when entering into life, and obliged to act for himself, receives from these circumstances a shade of thought and seriousness, so it is with the man who has left his ecclesiastical tutors and governors, and has gone forth into the wide world of knowledge, and is obliged to think for himself. He puts away the indifference and levity of his pupilage; he becomes considerate and thoughtful; he has cast from him the chains of superstition, indeed; but he has put on instead, the bonds of conscience, of moral responsibility.

What is thus naturally true of the manhood of a single life, is actually true of the manhood of the world. The world is more serious as it

grows older. Its pursuits are of a less trifling and frivolous character. Its pleasures are more intellectual. They are more refined; they have more of mind and sense, and of the proper object of recreation in them. We have orations now, instead of bull-fights to entertain the people, and grave processions, instead of mad tournaments. We do not crowd to see the deadly combat of gladiators; but those who did, so far from being more serious than we, could witness the death of a human being with more indifference than we the slaughter of a beast. — But I am wandering, perhaps, from the point. I will state, then, what *is* the point. Protestant Christendom is more sober than Catholic Christendom was, or is. It has fewer sports, and fetes, and holidays. There is more of thought in it, more of consideration, more of the intense and universal working of the mind, more of the strict and minute discriminations of conscience. Some portions of Protestant Christendom, I am tempted to think, are *too* sober, and have too much eschewed and avoided reasonable and useful recreations.

Be this as it may, however; — what I would say is, that free principles, whether civil or religious, whether in an individual or the world, do not naturally tend to disorder and anarchy, to licentiousness, and vice, and frivolity. This has always been the charge which their adversaries have brought against them. But it is not true. The true freeman, whether in Politics or Religion, is the best friend to a sober morality and a solemn piety, and to civil order and salutary government.

The man that is free, whether in Politics or Religion — the man that is free, paradox as it may seem, is the man that is most of all bound; bound, not by another, for then he would be a slave, but bound by himself. I see this man encompassed with bonds, and he wears them, not as rusting and galling fetters, but he wears them like a glorious vesture, or the mailed garments of the warrior; — wears them both for ornament and defence. I see this man, the free man, encompassed with bonds, and he needs them to sustain and strengthen him. He stands up, erect and independent. He has taken his hand from the altar of superstition, and from the throne of despotism; he leans not on these frail and crumbling props of religious and political slavery. He must, therefore, I repeat, gird up the loins of his mind, and be sober. He must gird himself in the armour of principle and conscience. No man has so much need to do this. No man is so likely to feel this necessity.

This, let me add, is precisely the doctrine which I wish to maintain. I do not say, that every man, who is free, is therefore wiser and better than other men. So general a proposition is more than could be maintained in any practical question or controversy about the human character. I do not deny, that in religion some men have used liberty for an occasion to the flesh; that some have perverted their liberty of thought into haughtiness and contempt of others, and their liberty of action into a neglect of the rights and interests of others: but I say that these are perversions of a good principle—of a principle more likely to contribute, and actually contributing more, to good than to evil. I maintain only, that the freest principles are the most generous and benevolent, the most pure and useful, the most temperate and sober, and, in fine, the most faithful and obedient to all the calls of religion and virtue.

Now let us turn for a moment to the subject of *Christian simplicity*.

I use this term here as opposite to a zeal about forms in religion. This zeal has undoubtedly declined in modern times. Simplicity has advanced. Men are less concerned about the forms, and more about the spirit of devotion. This unavoidably results from the progress of knowledge and refinement. Anciently men's religion necessarily partook very much of a ritual character. In a rude state of society, many forms are needed to impress religion. It was, in part, for the purpose of meeting this necessity, that the Jewish ritual was ordained. As the mind advances, it enters more into the real nature and spirit of religion.

This is the general statement, which we are accustomed to hear made on the comparative character and the contrasted progress of a spiritual, and a ceremonial piety. And from this is inferred the danger of sweeping away entirely, together with the frivolous and burdensome, the wholesome and needful formalities of religion. It is feared, by some, that this change is tending to a general indifference about all religious institutions. Men are liable, it is said, to refine and simplify too much. Now I have ventured to call this language in question. I say first, not too much, but on a wrong principle. And I say, secondly, that on the true principle there cannot be too much. Not too much, but on a wrong principle. For instance, a man may determine to give up every form for which he cannot find an express command in the New Testament. This is a wrong principle. The New Testament does not propose to assign all the forms in which men shall worship. There is nothing like a complete system of Church government, discipline, or worship, to be found in it. Men are left, in the general, to adopt such forms as they may find expedient. It is unquestionably expedient that there be a certain number of forms, greater or less, according to the state of society or the experience of individuals.

But this leads me to another observation. A man may hastily adopt the principle, that the fewer forms there are in the world, the better. *This* is wrong. It is not reasoning, but visionary nonsense. There are forms in everything—forms in friendship, forms in society, forms in business, and why should there not be forms in religion? I cannot say to what state the world may arrive. I cannot say, but it will become so honest that there will be no need of pledges, of bonds and notes of hand, or so religious, that it will need no forms; but I am certain that the time has not yet come. If there be any individuals of so spiritual and exalted a mind, that they need no forms, I pretend not to interfere with their secret conscience; but this, at least, is certain, that their religion must be peculiar to themselves; it is not suitable for the multitude; it is not made for this age, nor for the busy throng of this world's cares.

Let us now refer to the other point stated. Of a true spirituality or simplicity there cannot be too much. On the contrary, the more there is of it in any man's experience, the more deeply will he be interested in the forms that he does use: the more attached he is to the spirit of religion, the more he is to the means that appear to him to nourish it. For what is this spirituality, this process of simplifying? It is to separate vital religion from the things that do not belong to it, to penetrate more and more deeply into the very nature, the heart and soul of piety, to come nearer and nearer to the great Being who is its object—nearer and nearer to the great reality. It is a growing and more sensitive fear

of all forms of godliness, which are without the power; it is an increasing horror of the mockery of unreal worship, it is a more and more profound reverence for God. I believe there is nothing like the tenderness of feeling, the sensitiveness of conscience, the deep, and unfeigned, and unspeakable awe, which a man of true and growing spirituality and simplicity cherishes. And does it belong to such a man to be indifferent about forms? No; in truth, no man so deeply feels their sacredness. And of all those that he thinks proper and useful, no man so deeply feels the value. He may not think of this and that form as another does. He may judge of one or another, that it is not fitted to promote his devotion. He may feel that it stands in the way; and feeling that he must answer to God rather than to men, he may dispense with that form. He may do it from very tenderness of conscience. He fears to *tread*, where other men rush in with reckless and inconsiderate haste.

This, surely, is not the man to accuse of an indifference about forms. He is not indifferent to *any* forms. He feels more concerning those he *disuses*, than many who use them. He feels most of all about those which commend themselves to his judgment and conscience.

Look at this subject upon a large scale. Are forms more negligently observed in the modern world than they were in the ancient? Is the Protestant more indifferent to the rites and institutions of religion, than the Catholic? Without wishing to be uncharitable, I confidently say, no; but the very reverse. The simple services of prayer and meditation in our Protestant churches, though too dull as I feel, and painfully feel that they are, are, nevertheless, not so smitten with the deadly taint of formality, as have been the masses, the genuflexions, the sprinklings of water and burning of incense, in the Catholic ritual. There is a medium somewhere; and rites must not be burdensome, nor unmeaning, nor barely decent or imposing, to take a deep hold of the heart.

It remains to speak, in the third place, of *liberality and strictness*, and the length to which the previous discussions have run, will oblige me to do so very briefly; and I the more willingly submit to this restriction, because some of the topics, that might be embraced under this head, have already been considered under that of religious liberty. There is, however, a difference. A man may be free in his religious opinions; he may be under no restraint, and yet his mind may not qualify him to be liberal. This state of mind implies a range of observation, an extent of reflection, a discrimination of the relative value and importance of different truths and duties, a wide and comprehensive survey of the objects of life, which suppose not only freedom, but some enlargement of mind. Liberty is, indeed, the very soil of liberality; but that liberality will have expanded, and grown more or less, according to the degree of mental culture. A liberal man discriminates. He sees fewer opinions to be essential to character, than another. He sees goodness under every form of religion. He is not bound by any system of technical and scholastic theology. You know, perfectly well, what is meant by a liberal physician, a liberal jurist, a liberal merchant, or artist, or artisan. He sees into the principles of things, and is not blindly attached to one mode of practice, to one set of technical forms, or to one way of proceeding in the business of life. So it is with the liberal Christian. He will take a wide range in his views. He will think of religion, as he thinks of other subjects. He will discriminate the prin-

ciples from the forms of things. He will no more require a man to be religious after one particular and set fashion, than he will require a man to be honest, or industrious, or intelligent, after one particular and set fashion. He will provide, in his system of religion, for the liberal expansion of all the principles and powers of human nature. He will not strive to eradicate the native affections, but to cultivate them. He will speak in its accordant tone to every feeling, to fear and hope, to joy and sorrow. He will instruct, he will warn, he will encourage, he will soothe. He will feel that man was made to be a noble creature, and he will strive to build up in him the noble proportions of a glorious and lovely character. I am speaking now of no party nor sect. I have known liberal men of all parties. I have known illiberal men of all parties.

And now, I ask, must such a man be less strict in conscience for his liberality? If he must, I ask, why? His liberality relates chiefly to opinions, and modes of religious impression; his conscience relates to duties. But if you say, he is more liberal in his view of *duties*, that he does not account all those things to be duties, which you do; still I answer, he may be just as strict about those things that he does account to be duties. Let us particularize. You say he is more liberal in his ideas of what are to be considered as proper recreations; he does things that you would not do; he goes where you would not go. But does it follow that his conscience is any less strict about those pleasures which he does hold to be wrong? Does he, any less than another man, condemn gambling, intemperance, and sensuality, in all their forms? I appeal to facts. Is it in the liberal communities of this, or any other country, that profaneness, debauchery, gaming, most prevail?

But let us take our objector himself to task. Here is a man, who condemns things you approve. He says that you must not be amused with a show, or with wit. He says that you must not laugh—that you must not drink your neighbour's health, or that you must not eat flesh on Friday. Do you allow that this man has a stricter conscience than you? By no means; you say that his conscience relates to different things—to things that, in your view, are innocent. Very true; and out of thine own mouth thou art answered.

But I am not content with answer. I go farther, and maintain, that the liberal man is more likely to be truly and rationally strict. He thinks more and more freely. He takes a wider view of the relations of things and persons. He is strict in many cases, where another man is not strict; and cases far more important, too, than avoiding an amusement, or attending meetings. He is more likely to be strict in a meek and charitable judgment of the piety and virtue of his neighbour. He is more likely, also, from his liberality, to be strict in the duty of being agreeable, and kind to those around him, and in the endeavour to promote their happiness; to be strict in the delicate relations of private and domestic life. He is more likely to be strict in the virtues of modesty and self-distrust, of gentleness and forbearance. And for this reason: *in proportion as any man lays too much stress on unessential things, does he take it off from things that are essential.* If a man makes too much of doctrines, in just that proportion will he make too little of virtues. If he thinks, more than he ought, that his salvation depends on going to meetings, he will think less than he ought of his temper and

behaviour at home. If he makes too much merit of abstaining from an amusement, he will make too little merit of abstaining from harsh reflections on those who avail themselves of it. What does the history of all religion more clearly show, than this? It was when our Puritan fathers could not endure that any man should have long hair, that their conscience was clear for persecuting the Quakers. It is where the ritual of the Romish Church is carried to the greatest length, and observed in every iota, that the virtues of private life are brought into the most serious doubt and danger.

In fine, true liberality and true strictness are things that naturally go together. And so do true spirituality and a true reverence for religious institutions. And the same connexion holds between a pure religious freedom, and the most solemn obligation. No one is so much bound, no one ought to be so strict, no one owes so much gratitude and reverence to the means of religion, as the free, spiritual, liberal man. No one, I repeat, is so likely to feel all this.

In one word, all the qualities of a right and good character, will coalesce and blend into perfect harmony. This is true religion: this is Christianity. Where, or whom, this truth cuts, I cannot pause with any fastidious delicacy to inquire. If our liberality is laxness, if our spirituality is that sort of visionary and irrational speculation, which holds itself to be released from all forms for which there is no verbal command, if our liberty is turned into indulgence, and because there is no church power to threaten us, we feel no fear; then have these boasted qualities of ours a better name than they deserve: then, like the superficial world, are we deceived, and misled with names. Religion is reality; all else is shadow. It penetrates the heart; it dwells there; it is there, the freest, the simplest, the most liberal, but yet the most blessed and cherished, of all things. Without any power but its own power, it moulds and fashions, it subdues and softens, it comforts us, it fills us with joy. It is dearer than a right hand or a right eye; it is deeper in the soul than all the fountains of pleasure; it is stronger than all the impulses of passion. Of such a thing, a good man will not make an excuse, nor a pretension, nor a form, nor a name. No: oh! no. Heaven is not higher than his aspiration after purity. Hell is not so dreadful as the sin he fears. The universe is not so wide as the expansion of his immeasurable desires, and his immortal hope.

ON MODERATION.

PHILIPPIANS iv. 5: "Let your moderation be known to all men."

No virtue, no one of the Christian graces exists in perfection, unless it is modified and controlled by some other virtue or grace. The measure, the test, the utmost effort, the last finishing touch of the truest excellence, is to be found only in perfect moderation.

The soul is capable of a various action; or, in popular language, it is composed of various faculties. If one of these faculties were to absorb all the rest, if one kind of action were to take place of all others, the result would be, not a soul with the fair proportion in which God made it, but a monstrous deformity of the soul. As with the faculties, so it is with the virtues of the mind. Were any one, however excellent, to swallow up all the rest, it would not be a virtue, but an excess, an excrescence, a deformity. The plant, the tree, or the organized body, where one secretion, one branch, or one limb, should absorb all the vital juices and energies to the withering and decay of every other part, would present a just picture of such moral deformity.

That true proportion of the virtues, which I shall attempt to illustrate in this discourse, has never been perfectly exhibited on earth, but in ONE EXAMPLE. The most vaunted models of human excellence have too often been but the splendid excesses of ambition, genius, or learning. And, indeed, the most remarkable piety and philanthropy have often owed their celebrity, in a degree, to their extravagance. In short, some power or passion of the mind, disproportionately developed and exalted to an undue prominence, makes what is often denominated a great man, or a great Christian; but a man, a Christian, nevertheless, of great faults. The passion, that has shot up into a luxuriant growth, has overshadowed other passions, and taken away that strength of the soil, by which they also should have grown. Thus, in the pride of talents, some men have neglected humble acquisitions and offices. Under the impulse of genius others have become wayward, extravagant, irritable, and useless. In the fervour and joy of the social affections, many have forgotten their Maker. In the zeal of philanthropy, men are liable to overrate particular objects, and censoriously to condemn those who do not go along with them. In the confidence of piety not a few have seemed to forget the rights and feelings of society around them. There has never been on earth but one perfect example.

Nay, this state of things, though resulting from human infirmity, not only exhibits many errors, but it has tended to set up maxims of error. The real nature of some virtues, and the proper union of others, are lost sight of, in the common estimates of character. The ancient mistakes,

—by which meekness was confounded with meanness, and humility with debasement of spirit—are not yet done away. We do not look for great things from mildness and calmness, and yet these are ingredients of true power—these are characteristics of the power that is Almighty. We do not yet understand that the mightiest principle in the universe, that which exercises the most sovereign control over rational beings, is kindness. We do not yet understand that pride and courage, in the ordinary sense of these terms, are the most poor-spirited things in the world.

The age full of that crude earnestness, which is called excitement, the time full of religious dispute, the world full of zealots and partisans, is not yet prepared to understand the truth, the well-proportioned, the simple and sublime truth. If a man is called zealous, no one can think of him as being calm. If he is said to be serious, it does not occur to us, that he may be cheerful. If he is meek, then he is not accounted to be resolute; if gentle, then not inflexible; if sound and staid in judgment, then not ardent in feeling. And, indeed, these estimates, it must be confessed, arise from the ordinary and prevailing forms of character around us, though they take for granted an absolute incompatibility of qualities in the character which is not true.

It is desirable, then, to bestow some attention upon a subject so much misapprehended. It is desirable for the purpose of setting up a just standard in our own minds,—it is desirable for our own improvement, that we should consider the entire compatibility in a perfect character of all the qualities that form it—the entire compatibility and harmony of those qualities which appear to be the most opposite and irreconcilable.

In the discussion of this point, I anticipate that a part of our labour will consist in connecting, to some extent, new and unusual ideas, with old and ordinary terms. This, however, is not the work of captious criticism. It necessarily results from every step in the improvement of our moral theories and religious conceptions, that we should attach better and brighter ideas to common words. For the want of this improvement, for the want of these lofty conceptions, for the want of a deep religious experience, many of the words, that are commonly applied to religious and moral subjects, are, to most persons, dull words. Show me a people where the words virtue, piety, God, and heaven, mean all that they should mean, and you will give me the strongest possible proofs of the spiritual improvement of that people.

But it is time that I proceed to some details, which may better illustrate the principle for which I contend.

The precept of our text requires moderation. It may serve to show how familiar to the apostle's mind was this compatibility of opposite qualities for which I contend, to observe that the exhortation which immediately precedes our precept is one of a very fervent character—one, indeed, which our precept seems evidently introduced to control and modify. Rejoice in the Lord always, is the exhortation—and again I say rejoice. Let your moderation, this is the controlling principle—let your moderation be known to all men. But is the moderation designed to lessen the joy? Is it designed to restrain the true, legitimate, sacred joy? By no means. Rejoice always, and again I say rejoice; but give not way to a wild, tumultuous, inconsiderate ecstasy. And why? Because a wild, tumultuous, inconsiderate ecstasy is not the

real, rational, strong, and steadfast rejoicing. True joy is the offspring of thought. Deep joy is ever mixed with deep reflection. When it goes to excess, it becomes a weak, shallow, animal fervour. It is "a sober certainty of bliss" which religion offers to its votaries. It is a strong, deep, soul-sufficing joy. This is not inconsistent with moderation. This implies moderation.

But now let us consider more particularly what moderation is. It is opposed, not to excess of joy, only, but to excess of all kinds. What, then, is moderation? It is commonly considered as a very tame quality. A man of great moderation is judicious, sound, discreet; but not a man of lofty gifts and powerful energies. This is the common language; but I deny that the common language accords with the true theory of moral and intellectual greatness. What, then, I ask again, is moderation, in its loftiest character? It is self-control. It will indeed be a higher or lower virtue, according to the weakness, or strength of the mind in which it dwells: according to the powers it has to master. But it is the mastery over all. It is the strong self-control of the most powerful and impassioned minds, of the most fervent, glowing, energetic spirits.

It is, indeed, an essential quality of true genius, of true sensibility, of true religion. It is, I am inclined to think, the precise quality which distinguishes the loftiest forms of these several characters, from all inferior forms. Genius, without it, is wild; sensibility, wayward; religion, extravagant. It is the control of all impulse, energy, feeling, passion, and thought. It must then be a powerful principle. It brings all the elements of the soul into harmony; it binds all; it is the key stone of the arch; it is the crown of glory upon the radiant, but calm and "even brow" of virtue.

Let us now refer to other qualities. Meekness, gentleness, and humility are commonly opposed to courage, inflexibility, and loftiness of character. And the unfortunate result—for I must keep in view the moral purpose of these inquiries—the unfortunate result is, that the man, who would form a high, resolute, and daring character, thinks it necessary to lay aside the meekness, gentleness, and humility of the Christian temper. The youth, whose mind is glowing with ambition and hope, whose imagination is kindling at ideal excellence, whose spirit scorns everything that is not lofty and glorious, too seldom embodies in his visions, the virtues of humility, patience, forbearance, and forgiveness.

And yet the virtues which are thus despised, which the world generally holds in such low esteem, which those teachers of the educated world, the ancient philosophers, poets, and historians, have branded as mean and abject—those very virtues, I say, are the loftiest forms of that excellence which men profess to admire and seek. They are emphatically the Christian forms of excellence. Meekness, for instance, is the noblest form of true courage. For what is it? It is to offer to him, that smiteth on the one cheek, the other also. It is to see the scornful action, or to hear the slighting word, with a calm dignity and self-possession, that disprove the implication, and disarm the affront. It is to rise above the opinion of the multitude, and to refer one's-self to the judgment of God. And that is a courage of which the duellist, the avenger of himself, the angry defender of his honour, the man who

flies into a passion at every insult, knows nothing. But meekness is a still more comprehensive virtue. It is not only courage, but it may be pity, and gentleness of heart, that will not be angry, and sad, and mournful, but lofty reflection on human strifes, as if it dwelt in an angel's bosom; and more than all, it may be a noble homage to truth. For, suppose the strongest case, or that which is usually accounted the strongest. Suppose that your understanding is impeached. Suppose that you are called an ordinary man, a poor scholar, a dull genius, an ordinary man in your profession or occupation. If it is not true, it were nobler in you, certainly, to hear all this, with a calm consciousness of its injustice, than hastily to resent it. But if it is true, how much nobler still, how rare and almost unheard-of a nobleness would it be, simply and modestly to acknowledge the truth! Nay, how entirely would that acknowledgment, in a respect far more material than that of any technical acquisition, disprove the charge! How completely would it show that you are not an ordinary man—that you are farthest in the world from being an ordinary man! Would that be an ordinary virtue? I say that the world, with all its pride and pretension, might be safely challenged to meet you in that trying controversy, which is every day deciding on the characters of men. And you might safely say to the ambitious and haughty world, if that were your disposition, "I am superior to you all."

It would be easy, if it were necessary, to carry out the same parallel in favour of the other virtues, which I have included under this head of my discourse. The most inflexible resolution may dwell, and often has dwelt, in the bosom of perfect gentleness; nay, and eminently of the gentler sex. On this subject, I doubt whether the author of the celebrated Essay on Decision of Character had arrived to the loftiest conception of that quality. My objection is not simply, that he chose such a large proportion of his examples at the greatest distance from the Christian school, but that he has wrought into this inflexible decision of character, which he so powerfully describes, qualities of sternness and stoicism, that, in its most perfect form, do not belong to it. Where was there ever more inflexibility of purpose, more uncompromising individuality of aim, more noble decision of character, than in our Great Example? And yet where was there ever such gentleness?

Humility, again, I believe, it is no paradox to say, is the truest loftiness of character. For, what is humility? It is an unfeigned acknowledgment to ourselves, and to others, if need be, of our faults, mistakes, errors, and sins. And what is this, but a homage to truth, at the expense of our own pride, self-esteem, ease, and almost every cherished passion of the ordinary and worldly mind? That homage is called humility; but it is, indeed, the loftiest homage that man can pay to truth, to virtue, and to God! It is the love of all these—it is the love of everything glorious and excellent, forcing its way through all the barriers that the evil heart can set up to oppose it.

But I wish to carry this discussion, before I leave it, into a more palpable application to the forms and maxims of virtue and piety that prevail around us. Men find in themselves a certain temperament, a certain tone of sensibility, a certain peculiarity of mind and feeling, and they are liable to give themselves up to it, to consider it as their destiny to be thus and so, instead of laying upon those tendencies the due

restraint. Thus a man says, "My temperament is nervous and excitable; my feelings are quick and vehement; nature has poured a fiery tide into my veins: and how can I be expected to walk in the staid and regular steps of other men? I am a being of impulse; do not ask of me to be reasonable and moderate. I must follow my bias; I cannot fight against nature. I am liable to be irritated—to be passionate. Do not mind it; it is my way." Now, granting the premises; what is the conclusion? The very reverse, I answer, of what he draws from them. He, of all men, should think about restraint—should bind upon his conscience the duty of moderation. Because his passions are strong, is that a reason for throwing up the reins to them?

So a man says, "My firmness is very great, and it often becomes obstinacy. No man can be everything, he says, and I am that sort of man." But that is the very reason why he should strive to be another sort of man too. His very business is, not to give himself up to this tendency, but to control it by gentleness, by questioning himself patiently, by listening to the arguments of others. And especially is it to be learnt, in both instances, that there is no inconsistency between strength and calmness of feeling, between decision and gentleness in the character.

Let us now apply the same observation to some of the prevailing forms of religious character. Here, too, there are continual mistakes. For instance, when it is said to any one, "You belong to the liberal class of Christians," he is liable to suppose, from the imagined incompatibility of liberality with strictness, that he is not to be in any sense strict. What strict people do is no concern of his; he is a liberal Christian. And he is thus liable to cut himself off not only from what is good in the good examples of others, but from what belongs to the fair proportion of a good character. Again, another says, "I have the idea that religion is a cheerful thing; I have no belief in a lengthened visage, or a solemn manner, or in abstinence from cheerful recreations." And he may talk in this way to the injury of his more serious convictions. He may indulge in these views, and in this kind of conversation, till he feels far less than he should, or than he otherwise might, how serious, how solemn, how infinitely solemn an interest religion is. And so, on the other hand, a man, by taking to himself, too exclusively, the character of great and peculiar seriousness, by often saying that he, for his part, is strict and solemn, and that he is willing it should be known that he takes that ground, and by feeling, perhaps, some pride in being singular and stoical with regard to the pleasures of this life—such an one, I say, will be less likely to give the virtues of cheerfulness and agreeableness the place in religion that they deserve.

Now the proper answer to these several views is, that there is no incongruity between the various qualities to which they relate. We know, as a matter of common observation, that excessive mirth in an individual is no proof that he is constantly, or even ordinarily, light-hearted and thoughtless. Nay, some of the most melancholy men, that I have ever known, have been remarkable for an occasional and extreme gaiety of spirits. This, however, is not the true proportion and habit of a well-balanced and good mind. In such a mind, seriousness and cheerfulness do not dwell by turns, but they dwell together: and they dwell together without any effort being necessary to reconcile them. There is no war

between them. The true and best cheerfulness is a serious feeling; and the true and right seriousness is a cheerful feeling. Deep joy is the most serious of all feelings, and is often testified by tears. And the deepest seriousness, the most profound awe, that which arises from the fixed and absorbing contemplation of God, is a feeling of overpowering joy.

In fine, let me observe, that the truest piety, the truest virtue, not only thus embraces, harmonizes, and moderates all the qualities that belong to it, but that it has no more remarkable characteristic, than this very moderation of which I have been speaking. In deep and heartfelt goodness, in thorough principle, it seems to me, that there is a certain staidness and sobriety, an unostentatious quietness, a calm assurance of its own reality, and a conscious dignity, appearing sometimes almost like reserve—not hasty, nor forward, nor loud, nor strong in its expressions. It is a more imperfect and doubtful virtue, that speaks extravagantly, both about virtue and vice. And yet, when the more settled, calm, and assured virtue does speak, it is with that tone of reality, and sincerity, which carries more weight and power with it, than all the declamations of artificial earnestness and misgiving zeal.

Let me add, that the topic, on which I have now addressed you, seems to me most emphatically appropriate to the times. Not that we have too much zeal; not that we have too much enterprise; not that we have too much excitement; did each of these possess the right character. To obtain this, we have to advance farther, not to fall back. There is nothing, of which a high example is now more needed, than true moderation—than a quiet, resolved, self-subsistent virtue—than a virtue which is a principle, and not a paroxysm, a growth *in* a man, and not an excrescence upon him—a virtue which is strong enough to be calm, self-assured enough to be unostentatious, habitual enough to be easy and spontaneous—a virtue, whose greatness has the charm of humility, whose decision the beauty of gentleness, and whose courage the glory of meekness.

And such, indeed, in the representations of poets, at least, was the virtue of the old chivalry; and the ideal of virtue in that age seems, in this respect, to be higher than our own. The true-hearted knight of the minstrel's tale, was always courteous, modest, and even meek. The romance of those days had caught a spark from the primeval Christian altars.

But why should I speak of that faint and faded light, when the great example itself is before us in all its splendour. And most needful, indeed, is that example. For such is the infirmity of men's minds, that if it were not for one perfect example, we might almost have doubted the possibility of that complete harmony of opposite qualities in the character, for which I have contended. But in Him, who is set forth as pattern, prince and lord in the moral creation, there was nothing wanting, and there was nothing in excess. There was no conflict, no clashing in the qualities of his perfect character. I say not that he was grave, *but* cheerful. I conceive of a more perfect union. He was grave AND cheerful at the same moment, and in the same act. The thought, the affection, the act of the soul, that was serious, that very act was cheerful. This was the tenor, the habit, the harmony, of his perfect mind. Perfect in himself, patient with others; sublime in purpose,

simple in manners; superior to all, the servant of all; he dwelt among his disciples as Master, Teacher, Counsellor, Companion, Friend. Courageous to meet opposition, meek to endure injury; immoveable in his design, gentle in the fulfilment of it; glorious, as the Son of God, humble as the Son of Man; he walked among the degraded, the blaspheming, the captious, and the hostile, to blame, yet to pity them; to resist, yet to raise them; to sacrifice to them his life, to overcome them by his death. He was not courageous at one time, and meek at another; but his very courage was meek; his very inflexibility was gentle; his very glory and loftiness was that of an humble and filial reverence to his Father. Wonderful Being! worthy to be the Saviour of men! When shall the world understand thee? when shall it admire, love, follow thee, as it ought?

Christian! this is your perfection—far off from us, as yet, but it is for this that you must strive. Christian! if thou deservest the name, put away from thee all waywardness, all extravagance, all excess, all rashness, all uncontrollable passion. "Thou, O man of God! flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

THE

OLD WORLD AND THE NEW.

TO

FRANCIS BOOTT, M.D.

of London,

THE FOLLOWING PAGES

ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

A FEW words will explain the title and purpose of these volumes. They are not offered to the public as an Itinerary; and for the sake of anything which they contain of that kind, they would not have been published. But on returning to his native country, the author felt a desire which before he had not anticipated, to offer to his countrymen some of the thoughts which the Old World had suggested to his mind concerning the New. It seemed to him that every traveller to the Old World stood on a vantage-ground for surveying the institutions, customs, and character of his own country, which might entitle the results of his observation to some regard. There are many subjects of this nature, which the spectacle of the Old World will force upon the most negligent attention: such as manners, national health, amusements, churches and church establishments, the Catholic religion, the cultivation of the arts, and the many and momentous questions in politics which are now agitating the civilized world, and which press with peculiar weight upon our own country. It was the author's first intention to collect and expand the scattered hints on these and other general topics which he found in his journal, and to publish them in a small volume of essays. But, as observation may lend weight to reflection — as the scene may impart some interest to the sentiments which it awakened — he has thought fit, instead of presenting those reflections and sentiments in an abstract form, to embody them in a general narrative of his tour.

It is only necessary to add, in order to explain the style of address which may occasionally appear in these pages, that they were written for, and sent parcel by parcel, to his friends at home.

JOURNAL.

CHAPTER I.

PASSAGE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC — THE OLD WORLD — LIVERPOOL — MANNERS OF SERVANTS — STAGE COACHES — CHESTER — EATON HALL — NORTH WALES — CONWAY — MENAI BRIDGE — CAERNARVON — LLANBERIS — SCENERY OF WALES — GENERAL REMARKS.

June 24, 1833.—Only sixteen days from New York, and we are entering St. George's Channel. A gentle west wind took us up as we left the harbour of New York, and has borne us all the way across the Atlantic without once frowning upon us, or once deserting us (but for twenty hours), and all this, with less motion of the ship than I have more than once experienced in passing through Long Island Sound. I have been frequently reminded of the phrase which seamen often apply to it — "the great pond;" but I do not relish that familiarity with the mighty element. On the contrary, I am yet true to the landsman's feeling about the sea; and it seems to me as if I had passed over some mysterious realm of undefined extent and unknown peril. Nor yet for the landsman's feeling do I propose to take any shame to myself; in truth I would not lose it. Well do I remember how—often and often in my boyhood — I used to put my ear to the conch shell, the only object I had then seen from the ocean shore, and imagined — nay, I believed, that I heard the sound of its eternal winds and waves yet lingering in that mysterious shell. I do not believe that anything in this world can ever give me a more awful feeling of the sublime, than did that sound. And the idea that I should yet traverse that "world of waters" from which it came, involved something fearful, if not impossible, as would now the project of a passage to a distant planet.

In this all-knowing, un-wondering, matter-of-fact age, men cross the ocean, I believe, with as much indifference as they pull on their boots for a day's journey. But not so, I confess, have I crossed it, nor would I. A sense, as of some unfathomable mystery, has haunted me from day to day.

"And loose along the world of waters borne,"

is a fine line of Montgomery's, and conveys something of the vague and vast, in idea, which naturally comes over one, in such circumstances. What a strange thing is it, to step from the "sure and firm-set earth"

to the unstable element—to feel that divorce from all former possessions and familiar objects; from the fields, and the mountains, and the solid world—to be borne on the wings of the wind, on, on, day after day, day after day, and to reach no shore—to hear, night after night, rushing by one's very pillow, the deep, dark, fathomless sea!

And yet there is a strange mixture of things, too, in a life at sea, and on board of one of these magnificent packets. Reality and romance react upon each other, making both more strange. We have been sailing upon the dread and boundless ocean, naturally associated with none but ideas of difficulty and danger. And yet here is a saloon,* more splendid in its cabinet-work and whole finishing than any private apartment, perhaps, in our native land; here are a luxurious table and attentive servants; here, upon that tremendous element, one wave of which, could it put forth its power, would dash us in pieces, are groups of people easy and unconcerned—some are reading, some conversing, some singing, some engaged in amusements—sports and games: at night, all retire to their chambers in this floating palace; in the morning, they meet, and greet one another at the breakfast table, as if it were a large party on a visit in the country.

The grandeur of the ocean on our first getting out of sight of land, seemed to me something greater than I had felt before—the whole circle around boundless; it was, compared with looking off from the shore, like embracing in one comprehensive act of mind, the eternity past and to come. Yet I defy anybody, not thoroughly accustomed to the sea, to feel much of its grandeur after thought, imagination, feeling, sensation, have been rocked into that indiscribable state of ennui, disquiet, discomfort, and inertness, which the sea often produces. No; let me look off from some headland, or out from some quiet nook of the fast-anchored earth, to feel the grandeur or to enjoy the romance of the sea.

I wonder that nobody has talked, or written, or sung, or satirized, about this horrible discomfort of a sea voyage. It is said that Cato repented only of three things during his life—"to have gone by sea when he could go by land, to have passed a day inactive, and to have told a secret to his wife." I will not discuss the other points with the old stoic, but with the first I certainly have the most perfect sympathy. It is not sea-sickness; I have had none of it: but it is a sickness of the sea, which has never, that I know, been described. It is a tremendous ennui, a complete inaptitude to all enjoyment, a total inability to be pleased with anything. Nothing is agreeable—neither eating nor drinking, nor walking nor talking, nor reading nor writing; nor even is going to sleep an agreeable process, and waking is perfect misery. I am speaking of my own experience, it is true, and others find a happier fortune upon the sea; but, I believe that it is the experience of a *class*, not much less unhappy than the most miserable victims of sea-sickness.

June 25.—We are sailing slowly up St. George's Channel. It really almost requires an act of faith, to feel that in sixteen days we have reached the Old World; that yonder is the coast of Ireland, and there, on the right, is Snowdon in Wales. As we move on silently, borne along by an invisible power, it seems as if this were a spectre ship; and

* The George Washington.

the surrounding objects, a dream. The stillness and mystery of expectation come over one's mind like a spell—for this, indeed, is the mighty gateway to the Old World, and the misty curtain before us is about to burst asunder, and to turn the visions of a whole previous life into reality! If I were approaching the coast of Kamtschatka, or New Holland, it would be a different thing; it would be comparatively a common-place occurrence; but here is the birthplace of my language, of my mind's nurture—the world where my thoughts have lived, my father-land—and yet strange and mysterious as if it were the land of some pre-existent being!

The Old World!—my childhood's dream—my boyhood's wonder—my youth's study—I have read of the wars of grim old kings and barons, as if they were the wars of titans and giants—but now it is reality; for I see the very soil they trod. They come again over those hills and mountains—they fight again—they bleed, they die, they vanish from the earth. Yet other crowds come—the struggling generations pass before me; and antiquity is a presence and a power. It has a "local habitation." Its clouded tabernacle is peopled with life. Who says that the earth is cold and dead? It is written all over—its whole broad surface, every travelled path, every wave of ocean—with the story of human affections. Warm, eager life—the life of breathing generations, is folded in its mighty bosom, and sleeps there, but is not dead! Oh, world! world! what hast thou been through the long ages that have gone before us? Ay, what hast thou been? In this vast domain of old time before me, every human heart has been a world of living affections. Every soul that has lived has taken the experience of life; new and fresh, singly and alone, as if no other had ever felt it. Not in palaces only, but in the cottage, has the whole mighty problem of this wonderful humanity been wrought out. Sighings, and tears, and rejoicings, birthday gladness, and bridal joy, and clouding griefs, and death, have been in every dwelling. Gay throngs of youth have entered in, and funereal trains have come forth, at every door. Through millions of hearts on these very shores, has swept the whole mighty procession of human passions. How has it already lengthened out almost to eternity, the brief expanse of time!

Liverpool, *June* 26.—On approaching the higher latitudes, one of the most remarkable things that drew my attention, was the extreme shortness of the nights. It is not quite two hours from the end of the evening twilight to the first dawn of the morning. The sun sets, I think, at about half-past eight o'clock, and rises at half-past three in the morning. A gentleman on board said that he had read in England, by twilight, at ten o'clock in the evening without difficulty.

In sailing up the Mersey, I was struck with the aspect of the fields on the bank, particularly with the various shades of green. Most of them were lighter and brighter than are usually seen in America; the deep green of our fields I could hardly find—which, to be sure, I think nothing could replace. But this may be peculiar to the banks of the Mersey. If it is common in England, I shall conclude that the incessant rains, of which one is now dropping from the willing clouds, have produced one effect upon English scenery, which I have never heard anything of in the books of travels.

The next thing to attract the attention of the stranger in ascending

the Mersey, is—the glory of Liverpool—its docks. They wall up the river on the Liverpool side, with a solid mass of masonry (hammered freestone) thirty, forty, and, in some places, fifty feet from the foundation. The wall at top appears almost wide enough for a carriage way. The basins within are filled with ships, whose tangled masts and yards gird the town on that side with a mimic forest.

The bells have rung three chimes to-day, in compliment to the anniversary of the king's coming to the throne. In our country, it would have been the discharge of cannon; but I prefer the merry bells. What a singular language of rejoicing is the thunder of those death-dealing engines! I suppose it is the noise that recommends this method; just as a barbarian king gets a great drum, or gong, to make a great noise, because he knows of no other way of testifying joy. How much fitter would it be, on a birth-day anniversary, to have a band of musicians pass through the streets and in the public places, playing appropriate airs, martial or patriotic!

The thing I admired most in Liverpool was the new cemetery, with the chapel for the burial service. It was formerly a quarry of freestone; and was dug to the depth of a hundred feet I should think, so that it is quite retired and secluded, though streets and houses are around it. The chapel is on the elevated ground at the entrance, level with the street; and not far distant is the house occupied by the officiating clergyman, who enjoys a handsome salary from the board of aldermen.

The brick of which the town is mostly built, is of the ugliest description, resembling what we call fire-brick, and is besides so begrimed with smoke, that the town presents a very dingy and dismal appearance.

One of the first things that strikes the American stranger as he lands on the shores of the Old World, is the attention and deference he receives from those classes of the people whose business it is to minister to his comfort—from innkeepers, proprietors and drivers of coaches, waiters, porters, &c. servants of all descriptions—from those, in short, the breath of whose life is in the civility of their manners. It is a strong bond for civil behaviour doubtless, this necessity of getting a livelihood, and especially in countries where a livelihood is hard to come by; and it *may* cause civility to degenerate into servility: still, were it not to be wished that something of the *manner* at least could be learned in *our* country? Not that any class among us should entertain a sense of its relation to any other class that would be degrading to it; the very contrary. There is nothing that is more incompatible with a just self-respect, than the manners of a churl. No man really respects himself who is guilty of discourtesy to others. The waiter who brings me my dinner, and stands behind my chair while I eat it, very commonly shows in his frank and easy bearing, as much self-respect as I myself can feel. And the coachman who, when I ask him to give me a seat on the box with him, touches his hat as he answers, seems to me a far more respectable person than the stage driver of our country, who often answers with a surly indifference, as if he did not care whether you sat there, or sat anywhere at all. Both the coachman and the waiter are looking to you for a gratuity, it is true, in payment for their attentions; but it is a fair compact, and degrading to neither party. And for my part, I am as willing to pay for civility as for my dinner.

One would like to buy not only his dinner, but some reasonable chance of digesting it; and that is hard to do, when one has to digest slovenliness, negligence, and ill manners besides.

CHESTER, *July* 2.—It is so cold to-day, that I have ridden with a surtout and Indian-rubber great-coat over it, and have been scarcely comfortable. To be sure, it was on the outside of the coach—the only side, for my part, that I ever wish to see. The hand of prescription is heavy upon many things in England, small as well as great; they do here as their fathers did, in far more respects than we do. At least this is the only reason I can see, why they build in the centre of the coach a small, confined, dark box, with the curtains* obstinately fastened down, and cushioned indeed, so that they are never rolled up even in the hottest day of summer; and in addition to this inconvenience, the only chance of seeing the country is a loophole view through the window.

There are few sensations more agreeable—I believe I am nearly repeating Johnson—than those with which one sets off on an excursion of a fine morning, seated on the top of an English stage coach; the horses clothed in plated harness, burnished to the brightness of gold; the guard, seated on the back part of the coach, taking all care of baggage off your hands, and at the same time regaling your ears with a lively strain of music from his bugle; and the coachman—truly he deserves a separate paragraph. No mortal charioteer ever gave one such a sense of security—such a well-fed, well-dressed, respectable-looking person is he, as he steps forth, amid attendant lackeys and horse-boys, in his drab breeches, white-topped boots, and with the long and graceful whip in his gloved hand—but above all, a person of such corporeal weight and substance, of such a massive and compact frame, that as he takes his seat on the coach-box, you fancy him saying to all obstacles and dangers,

> "Come one, come all, this rock shall fly
> From its firm base as soon as I."

Chester is an ancient city, with marks of antiquity in every structure and stone. The streets are channelled out of the freestone foundation rock. This makes the basement story, which is mostly used for shops. The first story above this retreats back from the street, leaving a planked sidewalk, of six or eight feet wide, while the second story again comes forward to the line of the street, thus making a covered walk over the whole city. These recesses or piazzas are full, everywhere, of queer-looking little booths, or shops, not bigger than a nutshell. The city itself looks as if it were made for "hide and go seek," or something worse—full of corners and crannies, of a most suspicious appearance—full of narrow passages and blind alleys, leading away into darkness and obscurity.

A fine walk on the walls that surround the old city. I went to the tower on the wall, from which it is said that Charles I. beheld the rout of his army on Rowton Moor. I ascended those steps, which I

* The sides of an American stage coach are furnished with leather curtains, which in fine weather are rolled up, admitting light and air, and of a prospect in all directions.—ENG. ED.

imagined he went up that day, with eager and anxious hope, and which he came down, doubtless disappointed, dispirited, and foreboding evil; for this was a dark hour in the history of that unhappy monarch's fortunes. But how inconceivable it is, that a man, with his blood not frozen in his veins, could stand upon a wall and see his own battle fought out, beneath his very eye—himself an idle spectator!

I am not conversant with antiquities, but there seems to be evidence that Chester was anciently a Roman station. Indeed, I believe the philologists derive the name of Chester from the Latin *castra*, a camp. It is said, that there are remains of a Roman bath to be found in a cellar here; and a Roman altar was discovered near a fountain in this vicinity, in 1821. It now stands in the Marquis of Westminster's grounds, at Eaton Hall, raised on a platform of marble, taken from one of the palaces of Tiberius at Capri: so far westward did the wing of the Roman eagle stretch. This altar might have been erected to the god Terminus; but it is dedicated to the nymphs and fountains—for thus runs the inscription:—

Nymphis
et
Fontibus
Leg. XX.
V. V.

I shall not undertake any minute description of this estate and seat of the Marquis of Westminster. But conceive of a sort of township of land fifteen or twenty miles in circumference, under the most perfect cultivation, and laid out in the beautiful style of English country-grounds—broad lawns intersected by smooth roads and gravelled walks, with noble clumps, and winding belts, and majestic avenues of trees in every direction—the gardens and ornamental grounds alone employing sixty or seventy men the year round; conceive of an immense Gothic building of hammered freestone in the centre of this domain, spreading four hundred and twenty-five feet—about twenty-six rods—in front; enter this building and survey the magnificent apartments, some of them fifty feet long, and thirty-five feet in height, with gilded ceilings and painted windows, and filled with gorgeous furniture of every description; visit the chapel, large enough to accommodate a small congregation, and where daily prayers are said, during the residence of the family; go to the stables and outhouses—a little village by themselves; and then pass through the garden, filled with hothouses and conservatories, enriched with rare plants, blooming with flowers, and laden with fruits enough to supply a village; and then take into the account, that this is but one of the seats of its wealthy owner, and you may have some idea of the princely state of the Marquis of Westminster.

From the moment that you set your foot on this magnificent domain, everything reminds you that you have come within the fairy circle of wealth and taste, elegance and luxury. You enter by a pretty Gothic lodge, two or three miles from the castle. You are borne on, upon a smooth and winding road, with not one pebble to jar your carriage wheel: the edge of it as accurately defined by the bordering, smooth-shaven greensward, as if the thing were done with scissors; a fine belt of trees accompanying it on either side, at the distance of twenty or

thirty feet, and only interrupted here and there, to open to you the view of an almost boundless lawn, covered with herds of cattle and deer. When I was going through the garden, the immense quantity of fruit led me to ask the gardener who accompanied me, what was done with it; "for," I said, "you cannot possibly eat it at the castle; do you sell it, then?" The man drew himself up, and said, "Oh no, sir, nothing is sold from this garden." "Well, then," I said, "what *is* done with it?" "It is sent in presents to my lord's tenants," was the reply. A very pleasant way, doubtless, for my lord to make himself agreeable to his tenants! There must be something good and grateful in a relation that leads to acts of kindness like this. And the corresponding deference and gratitude of the tenantry may, doubtless, in a certain state of society, have their uses, and proprieties, and beauties. But is there no danger of servility on the one hand, or of tyranny on the other? And do not fixed conditions like these of lord and tenant, necessarily tend to prevent, in the lower classes, the fair expansion of character? I certainly do not believe in the expediency of such a state of social relations; and yet, when I have seen those in our country—they are not the many—whom *fee simple* and freedom have taught to respect nothing but their own importance, I have thought it had been better for them to have been tenants of an English landlord. If men will not reverence anything higher, then let them reverence the Marquis of Westminster!

Bangor, *July* 3, 1833.—On the road to Bangor are Holywell and St. Asaphs, not remarkable, except as all these Welsh towns seem to me remarkable, for ugliness; built without any order; the streets narrow; scarcely any sidewalks; the houses mostly small, dingy, brick buildings; and yet, every now and then, is seen some singular, picturesque-looking house, with its walls covered with ivy or vines, and with shrubs, roses, &c. about the door and in the windows—redeeming features in the scene, and indications of that diversity of provisions for the gratification of taste, which is so much more striking in the Old World than in ours, and of tastes too that rise above physical wants.

But Conway is really worth seeing. It is an old walled town—the wall still standing, with twenty-four circular towers in very good preservation. The castle of Edward I. in ruins, flanked by four immense round towers, is a sublime object. This castle, which also "frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood," brought to mind Gray's ode, where the ghosts of the ancient Welsh harpers are represented as hurling down anathemas upon the "ruthless king." Time has executed the anathema upon the building itself, for the grass is growing upon the tops of the towers.

The Menai Bridge.—Who could ever have thought of calling a *bridge* sublime? And yet that is actually the impression made by the Menai Bridge. It is very different, to be sure, from the sublimity of castles or cathedrals; it never, perhaps, can have the sublime of association—a battle, indeed, might give it; but this structure has a grandeur of its own. It bestrides an arm of the sea—connecting Anglesea with the mainland. It is an hundred feet from the water. The part suspended is 550 feet in length. The arches and towers are masses of masonry as stupendous as the Roman aqueducts.

The sole material of the part suspended is iron. As I approached it

—it was towards evening—I could see nothing but the towers. And when you distinguish the fine delicate tracery of the iron chains and supporters, it seems as if it were nothing but gauze or cobweb, compared with the mighty masses of masonry on which it rests. The vehicles travelling over it look as if they were suspended in the air. I went down to the shore below, and as I looked up, it seemed to span a whole third part of the heavens. A celebrated lady,* since dead, in speaking of this stupendous work, said, that she first saw it from the Isle of Anglesea, so that it was relieved against the lofty mountains of North Wales; and she added in a strain of eloquent and poetical comparison familiar to her, that "Snowdon seemed to her a fit back-ground for the Menai Bridge."

July 4.—To-day I made an excursion down to Caernarvon, through the pass of Llanberis, to Capel Carig (Kerrig) and back again to Bangor, and on to Holyhead.

At Caernarvon is another old castle of Edward I. in ruins: the town, too, like Conway, is surrounded by a wall with towers. The walls of the castle are very thick, in some places ten feet. I should judge the space enclosed must be 1500 by 150 feet. There are several huge towers, one of which I ascended to the top: the stone steps much worn. It consisted of two walls, with narrow, dark passages all around between them. On the inner wall, abutments on which the beams and floors of the successive stories were supported, were evident; and also the fireplaces. An anteroom to one of these central apartments (about twelve by seven feet), was pointed out as the birthplace of Edward's son, the first Prince of Wales. It was thus, as history says, and Welsh tradition still holds, that Edward the I. claimed the promise which he had obtained of these intractable mountaineers, that they would submit to a native-born prince.

This is indeed a place in which to muse and moralize. Who can look upon the humblest hearthstone of a ruinous and deserted cottage, such as I have sometimes seen, even in our own country—our only ruins—without reading on it the whole history of human affections? The hearthstone seems everywhere like a tablet of the heart. But here kings and nobles have come, with the tramp of horses, and the blast of trumpets, and the ringing of armour. Here proud men have bid defiance, and brave men have died. Here fair women have mingled in feast and song, or started and turned pale, at the summons of the besieger's horn. And now all is silent and desolate. Grass overgrows the court-yard, and waves from the tops of the walls and towers. The birds build nests in these turrets, and chirp about them as if they were grand old places for aviaries; and the visiter comes, not to feast, but to meditate. What different scenes have passed here! what thoughts have been revolved around these lonely, deserted, and scarce discerned firesides! what affections have here kindled, and glowed, and withered, and faded away! what footsteps have been upon these rough stairs! Enough! they have been the footsteps of *men!* Light and joyous hearts had they borne, though they had not been the hearts of princes. And heavy hearts had they borne, though they had not been carried wounded and bleeding from the battle strife.

* Mrs. Hemans.

Everything about this old castle shows the purpose for which, mainly, it was constructed; small apertures rather than windows, out of which arrows, or other missives could be thrown, and opening inward to a space in the wall large enough for a warder to stand in; three or four narrow loopholes on each side of the great gate of entrance, for the purpose of reconnoitreing those who approached; and inside of the gate, the groove in which the portcullis slided up and down.

I am satisfied that in order to gain any approach to an idea of these things, without seeing them, one must not be content with barely reading the description, but must lay down the measurement upon some familiar spot. For instance, the walls of this castle, I judged from a rough measurement, to be two hundred rods in circuit; and they are nearly eight feet thick, and perhaps thirty feet high; and the principal tower may be ninety or one hundred feet high, and fifty feet in diameter. So of the Menai Bridge, or of Eaton Hall. I am sure I got a far more impressive idea of Niagara falls, and probably far more just, by laying it down on a landscape three quarters of a mile in extent, and then conceiving a precipice of one hundred and sixty feet in height, and an ocean pouring over it.

Except the sublimest, I suppose that every description of mountain scenery is to be found in Wales; unless it be, also, the contrast of hills and mountains to the perfect levels of our New England intervals and river banks—like which I have seen nothing. The pass of Llanberis and the road from Capel Carig are almost level, while the wildest mountains rise almost from the very roadside, on either hand. There is every variety of form—steep, swelling, bald, shaggy; massy and pointed tops; sides sometimes ploughed by the mountain streams, and sometimes only seamed by the trickling rills; while around their eternal battlements and turrets, the light mist floated, every moment varying its shapes, now unveiling some stupendous ledge or crag, and then shrouding it in thick darkness. The pass of Llanberis is part of the Snowdon range; but old Snowdon himself was all day enveloped entirely in clouds.

I observed one curious effect of wind in this pass. As I was walking along the road where it is cut out of a ledge of rock, and leaves a deep defile below, I heard a noise on the lower side, as of a rushing stream chafing its base. I stepped to the wall at the roadside, and perceived that it was, not water, but wind—a mountain gust so powerful, that it was necessary to hold on my hat as I leaned over. I stepped back but four feet, and all was quiet—the air was still. I repeated the experiment several times, with the same result.

For another description of scenery in Wales, imagine something like the following: A deep dingle, sinking almost beneath you, at the roadside, with a little lane winding down through hawthorn hedges to one or two cottages half covered with ivy and overshadowed with trees; just beyond, rising and boldly swelling up from the chasm below, a noble sweep of hills, cultivated to the very top, yet not bare and naked as it probably would be in America—cultivated and rich, but studded with beautiful clumps of trees; a ploughed field sweeping gracefully around a little grove; a pasture dotted over with noble oaks; the fences on all sides verdant hedges, not always well clipped to be sure, but beautiful in the distance, &c. Now, if you will introduce on the other side,

ragged, bold, precipitous mountains, like those of the pass of Llanberis, with goats far up among the steepest ledges, quietly cropping the grass that springs among the rocks, or sleeping on the very brink, you will have a *panorama* of the scenery of North Wales.

General Remarks.—The houses (always of stone or brick, by the bye) are commonly low, miserable habitations. I went into several—those of the cottagers and small farmers, I mean—and I never saw a wooden floor upon any of them. They were paved with stone; or more commonly not even that accommodation was afforded. The women I thought handsomer than those of England—I speak of the common people—the faces not so bold, marked, and prominent, indeed not enough so, but more delicate. This provincial or national difference of countenances is certainly very curious. I perceived it as soon as I was in Wales.

CHAPTER II.

DUBLIN — ARCHITECTURE OF CITIES — BEGGARS — ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL — MRS. HEMANS — DROGHEDA — IRISH COTTAGES — PEAT BOGS — BELFAST — SCENERY AND PEOPLE OF THE NORTH OF IRELAND — CARRICK-A-REDE — GIANT'S CAUSEWAY — CASTLE OF DUNLUCE — STEAMER TO GLASGOW.

Dublin, *July* 5, 1833.—I am glad to get a pleasant impression of any spot in Ireland; Dublin is a fine city. It resembles Philadelphia in two respects—its regular ranges of buildings, and its fine open squares. What a pity it is, that cities, or at least streets in cities, could not, like single edifices, be built upon some regular and well-considered plan! Not that the result should be such regularity as is seen in Philadelphia or Dublin; the plan, indeed, would embrace irregularity. But there might be an arrangement, by which a block of buildings, a street, or, indeed, a whole city, might stand before us as one grand piece of architecture. If single specimens of architecture have the effect to improve, humanize, and elevate the ideas of a people, if they are a language, and answer a purpose kindred to that of literature, poetry, and painting, why may not a whole city have this effect? To secure this result, there must, I am afraid, be a power like that of the autocrat of Russia, who, I am told, when a house is built, in his royal city of St. Petersburgh, which does not conform to his general plan, sends word to the owner, that he must remove that building and put up another of a certain description. But as we have not, and will not have, any such power exercised among us, I suppose we must have such cities as Boston and New York, such streets as Broadway: which is a sort of language, too, which sets forth visibly, in stone and mortar, what is the spirit that reigns in our country—the very personification of the principle of individuality—where every one builds to please himself, and pleases to build differently from his neighbour—usually a little *higher*. It is a principle that spoils a city; that it will *make a people*, is the reflection in which we must find our comfort.

But to return. Dublin is, indeed, a fine city, and filled with noble mansions and showy equipages; but alas! all is marred by this dismal-

looking population; full half that I meet in the streets, very shabbily dressed; many in rags; the boys would collect in America, and the very dogs would bark, at spectacles that pass me every moment; men and women on every side begging; women with children in their arms, imploring charity for God's sake; yes, innocent childhood is here involved in the common mass of misery, and that is the hardest of it to the spectator. Indeed, I have seldom seen anything more striking or touching, than a child sleeping in its mother's arms amid all this surrounding turmoil and distress. It is actually picturesque, if one may say so: the image of repose amid noise and turbulence; innocence amid vice and wretchedness; unconscious ease on the bosom of suffering; helplessness imploring even more pathetically than the wan and haggard features of maternal solicitude. No doubt there is a good deal of acting in this system of beggary. For instance, I saw a little girl, last evening, seated on the curbstone of the sidewalk, and holding in her arms a sleeping infant—but holding a candle at the same time so as to exhibit the infant to the best advantage. This is going on the stage pretty early. What the receipts were I do not know, but they doubtless expected to be repaid the outlay of lights and wardrobe, and something more.

It is a comfortable reflection which I have often had occasion to make, that Providence does, after all, dispense many blessings, which neither the pride nor improvidence of man can destroy. The children of the poor sleep as sound and are as merry, probably, as the children of the rich. And perhaps, after all, these splendid equipages that are passing on every side, bear as many heavy and aching hearts, as lean against the steps and balustrades by the wayside.

Everything is done here to get money. For instance, the scene in the street before the windows of my hotel, last evening, presented the two following specimens. First, a man with a hand-organ struck up, and a woman and child (his wife and daughter probably), after carefully laying down their bonnets and shawls, commenced dancing in the street, and after a variety of evolutions, they went round to the spectators to collect as many pence as they could. Next came a man with a flute, and a child apparently four or five years old was set to dancing upon stilts five feet high.

Sunday, P.M.—This afternoon I have heard the finest church-music by far that I have ever listened to; and the only performers were a man and two boys. It was at St. Patrick's Cathedral. The organ is the richest I ever heard. As to the ages of the children, the one of them might be ten, and the other twelve or thirteen years old. Their voices were so completely formed, that I supposed, for some time, that women were singing, and at the same time peculiarly soft, with none of that shrillness which is apt to be the fault in a woman's voice. The man's voice was a perfect organ. Amid the deepest notes of the organ, I heard it as distinctly as the diapason itself. The greatest ease characterized the whole performance, as it always does the highest music. The sermon was very well—the reading execrably bad. The prayers were sung forth in a kind of recitative tone peculiar to the cathedral worship of the church of England; for it falls short in the tone of song of that which is used in the Jewish and Romish rituals. The service, held as it was in this ancient building, beneath high Gothic arches, surrounded by ancient marble tombs and statues, by galleries of every

fashion, and carved work, curious and antique, with banners overhead, and helmets and swords hung on the walls—the service, I say, in such circumstances, seemed as if it ought to be held by no common people—but by the high-born and the high-bred—by renowned knights, or heroes going forth to battle for their country.

After attending upon the service at the cathedral, I passed the evening with Mrs. Hemans. The conversation naturally turned upon the scene I had just left, and her part in it was sustained with the utmost poetical enthusiasm. She spoke of the various accompaniments of the service, and when she came to the banners, she said, "they seemed to wave as the music of the anthem rose to the lofty arches." I ventured here to throw in a little dash of prose—saying that I was afraid that they did not *wave;* that I wished they might, and looked up to see if they did, but could not see it. "No," she replied with vivacity, "wave is not the word—but they thrilled—I am sure of that." And *that,* it is very likely, something short of "the vision divine" might see. Such vision, however, this lady undoubtedly possesses. She has the genuine *afflatus,* and those who think its breathings too measured and monotonous do not consider or read her poetry in the right way. There is nothing dramatic or epic in her best poetry; it is essentially lyrical; and those who attempt to read it by the volume, as much mistake as if they should undertake to read a book of hymns, or the Psalms of David in that way. In her own chosen walk, Mrs. Hemans has few competitors in Britain, and no equal; and so long as solemn cathedrals, and ancestral halls, and lowly homes remain in England, her song will not die away.

July 8.—I have experienced to-day my first traveller's vexation. I had fallen in with a couple of travellers in Wales, and we had agreed to go in company to the Giant's Causeway. We had taken our passage to Belfast, for this morning, and when the coach drove up to the door of our hotel, it was so overloaded that we could not go in it. It was amusing to see the national characteristics of my companions on this occasion. The Englishman was all pride, and wrath, and decision. "I will not go in this coach!" was his reply to the apologetic coachman—"and I will be sent on! or I will apply to a magistrate and see if there is any law in Ireland." The Frenchman appeared not a little like a *subject* under a galvanic battery; he shook his fist, and his elbows twitched, and he stammered and stuttered—saying I know not what—for I was too much amused with the muscular contractions, to take notice of anything else. The American—videlicet myself—was very calm on the occasion, and this *calmness* is said to be our national trait of manner. I understand this last observation, however, to apply only to the case of an affray or dispute.

To Belfast, *July* 9.—The most remarkable town on this route is Drogheda, with a population of 25,000, and yet looking like a population of mendicants; scarcely a well-dressed man or woman in the thronged streets; but decrepitude and disease, beggary, rags, presenting themselves everywhere in frightful masses. It is almost entirely a city of mud-walled cottages, and thatched roofs; and altogether a spectacle so entirely unlike anything I ever witnessed before, or shall probably ever witness again, that I would not have failed to come and see it. Drogheda is a walled town, standing on the river Boyne, and known in

history as surrendering to William III. after the battle of Boyne. The battle was fought near this town; an obelisk, which we saw at a distance, marks the spot. William's conquest is celebrated on the twelfth of this month, by processions of the Protestants, which, being held in dislike by the Catholics, often occasion quarrels — on which account, troops are at this time ordered into the north, and we passed a regiment of them to-day. Indeed, these "grievances red-dressed" of Ireland appear everywhere in all the cities and villages.

We have passed hundreds of Irish cottages to-day; but what pen shall describe them, that does not literally bespatter the page with mire and dirt! Mud and thatch, with little light—nasty as pigstyes—ragged women and children about the door, and often the men lying down by their hovels, in laziness, filth, and rags—a horribly vile puddle always before the door, for the accommodation of the most horribly filthy animals — said animals, in the mean time, equally and worthily occupying the domicile with the human beings who inhabit it. And to complete the picture of general misery, women beggars surrounded us every time we stopped, with children in their arms, imploring charity. From the numbers of children, indeed, it would seem as if this were the most prolific country under heaven. But it may be, because none of them go to school, and all live out of doors.

The latter part of the ride, through Newry, Hillsborough, and Lisburn, has been through a beautiful and rich country, and has been, indeed, such a redeeming scene for my general impressions of Ireland, that I am most glad to have passed through it.

We have passed a number of large peat bogs. They are evidently the beds of decayed forests; for trees are constantly dug out of them. Do I remember to have read, or have I heard, that some king of England, perhaps Richard II. finding that the forests of Ireland rendered it difficult of conquest, gave to his English subjects, who would come over and settle in Ireland, as much land as they would fell the wood upon? If so, an act of destruction and tyranny laid up a treasure for the future wants of Ireland, and one almost indispensable to the existence of the people—and a treasure too, not only of materials for warming their houses, but for building them. For the trunks of those ancient forests are found in these peat bogs in such a state of preservation that they are actually valuable timber—particularly the spruce; the oak too, though not so sound.

Cushendall, *July* 10.—The ride to-day, in the county of Antrim, of which indeed Belfast is the shire town, and through the villages of Carrickfergus, Larne, and Glenarm, has been delightful. The vicinity of Belfast, on this side, is rich in scenery; and the little village of Glenarm, directly under your eye and almost under your feet, as you descend the lofty hill which you pass over to reach it, with its embowering groves of trees, and the fine seat and grounds of some lord of the manor here, is a perfect charm. The road has been mostly by the sea-shore, winding around bold bluffs, and promontories, and rocky crags, and has presented many delightful views of intermingled ocean and hill or mountain scenery. Latterly, the rocky barriers of the ocean, by which I have been passing, have begun to assume something of that appearance of regular formation which I expect to see perfected at the Giant's Causeway.

This north-eastern part of Ireland was originally settled by the Scotch, and it bears a very different aspect from the southern portions of the route on which I have been passing. There is everywhere an appearance of thrift and comfort; and beggars have almost disappeared. The countenances of the people show a different origin—are more agreeable, more intelligent, more alive with expression—nay, and shorter and broader. I saw two or three schoolhouses, also, which I have scarcely met with before, on my way.

July 11. Bushmills, *two miles from the Giant's Causeway.*—The road is through Ballycastle to this place.

Nothing, it would seem, can resist abject, deep, desperate poverty, for we have passed through two or three small villages to-day, of Scottish origin, which are, if possible, more insufferably dirty than any I have seen before, albeit Irish.

Carrick-a-Rede is about six miles on the road to the Causeway—a place of tremendous precipices by the sea; with a hanging bridge suspended on ropes over a chasm eighty feet deep, leading to a small island, where is a salmon fishery. The ropes looked very small, and very old. I inquired of the guide how old they were, and he said, many years. I advised him in conscience to inform all travellers of that fact, and promised him his task of conducting them over would be excused, as it was of performing that service for me; for I have no chances of life to throw away, when no good is to result either to myself or others. The colour of the sea-green water here, with dark masses of sea-weed interspersed, is more beautiful than I ever saw elsewhere.

Giant's Causeway.—No one should come here, without taking a boat, if the state of the water will permit, and going to see the great cavern and the Pleaskin; which are the sublime things about this wonderful work of nature. The cavern is six hundred feet long, and the arch over it, ninety feet high. The Pleaskin is the loftiest and most regular part of the gigantic ledge of basaltic rocks. One bold head or promontory advances forward perhaps a hundred and fifty feet in front of the general line of the precipice, and on each side the columns retreat in the form of an amphitheatre. There are several others indeed, but this is the most striking. There is one that sustains a rock, which is called "the Crown," but the Pleaskin cliff appears as if it were the throne of the place, supported by ranges of peers on each side; and thus it has stood out and met, unshaken, the storms of thousands of years

After examining these spots, I went to the lower ranges of columns which rise just above the water, and landed from the boat to inspect them. They are wonderfully curious; of all sizes and shapes—from six to eighteen inches in diameter, from the triangle to the nine-sided figure—though the hexagonal form is the most common; and so exactly fitted together, that in some places the water stands on them without finding any passage down. Each column consists of many parts, as is usually seen in columns of human construction. The length of the parts varies, from six to twelve and eighteen inches, and one has been found about five feet long. To give strength to the whole mass, the articulations or joints of the columns are never in the same line, but vary—some of the blocks rise a little above others, presenting not a level but an uneven surface on the top. And furthermore, the surfaces at the

ends of the separate blocks are never plain, but convex and concave, the two kinds of surfaces always and exactly fitting into each other.

The height of the precipices upon the shore here is from three hundred and fifty to four hundred feet. The upper half only is columnar. The steamboat in which I took passage—from Portrush, three miles from the Causeway—carried us along the north coast of Ireland. The waves of the wild North Sea seem everywhere to have washed it to precipices. That of Fair Head is the most imposing cliff I have ever seen.

I must not forget to mention the ruins of the Castle of Dunluce, on this coast, a little above the Causeway. It stands upon, and completely covers, a small island which is about twenty feet from the shore, and is now permanently joined to it by a stone bridge for foot passengers. This island is itself a craggy precipice rising three hundred feet from the water, and on the very verge of the precipice stand the castle walls. How impregnable it must have been may be easily judged. And yet it was once taken by a ladder of ropes; not, however, without treachery in the garrison. It has been the scene of much romantic story in the Antrim family—this name having been conferred, with an earldom, upon the family of Dunluce. An earl of Antrim married the wife of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. The castle is in ruins of course, but the forms of the rooms, the chimney flues, &c. are preserved.

I found a usage prevailing on board the steamer which conveyed us to Glasgow, which marks the difference between English institutions and ours.* Every steamboat, stage coach, and hotel, has its aristocratic *place de reserve*. Those who occupied the quarter deck of this boat, paid, I think, four times as much for their passage, as those who stood two feet below them on the main deck. Were such an arrangement to be made in one of our boats, the end of it, I suppose, would be, that everybody would go on the quarter deck.

CHAPTER III.

SCOTLAND—A STAGE COACH CONVERSATION—EDINBURGH; ITS UNRIVALLED BEAUTY—ARTHUR'S SEAT AND SALISBURY CRAG—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OBJECTS OF ROMANCE AND OF REAL LIFE—HOLYROOD—ST. LEONARD'S CRAG—EXCURSION TO THE HIGHLANDS—STIRLING—THE TROSSACKS—LOCH KATRINE—LOCH LOMOND—HIGHLAND COTTAGE AT INVERSNAID—HAMILTON—BOTHWELL BRIG—LANARK—TWEEDDALE—ABBOTSFORD—MELROSE AND DRYBURGH ABBEYS—COMPARISON BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF SCOTLAND AND OF NEW ENGLAND.

As I took my place on the top of the coach at Glasgow for Edinburgh, I found a handsome young man seated opposite to me, a boy of twelve years, and a modest-looking Scotch girl, with eyes sparkling like diamonds, and a freckled cheek, which coloured and changed at every turn; and to whom the young gallant was evidently attempting to make himself agreeable. On the fore part of the coach sat a young fellow,

* I am told, however, that such an usage does prevail in the boats on the Mississipi.

who I soon saw was much given to ranting sentiment. We took up on the way a sturdy-looking middle-aged man, dressed in coarse but substantial broadcloth, who said, to my surprise, as he took his seat, "This is the first time I ever was on a coach." What American that ever was dressed at all, could say that? However, this made up our dramatis personæ; for we had a dialogue on the way, in which I took so much interest that I shall record it.

I forget how the conversation began, but I soon observed some sharp sparring between the gallant and the sentimentalist, in which the former was expressing some ideas of the strongest sceptical taint, and especially insisting that there was no life beyond the present.

"Ay," said the sentimentalist, "I know what you are; I have seen such as you before; you believe nothing, and destroy everything. Do you believe there is a *God?*"

"Oh! certainly I don't deny that," was the reply.

"Well," said the other, "you'll find there is a God yet, and you'll find what it is to die yet, and you'll see that after death cometh the judgment;" and he then, without much delicacy, warned the Scotch girl to beware of such a fellow.

"You may talk," said the gallant, "but you know nothing about it, and nobody knows anything about it. I know as much as you do, and that is nothing. There is a man dying! Now look at him. Everything that you know about him dies with him. His speech dies; his thoughts die; the man dies, and there is an end of him."

It was easy to see that our rustic fellow-traveller was very much shocked. He seemed never to have heard anything like this before.—He was evidently a representative of the true home-bred Scotch faith, who had duly learned his catechism in childhood, and duly attended upon the kirk ever since, and never thought there was anything to be mentioned in religion, but the kirk and catechism. He looked this way, and that way, and shifted from side to side on his seat, and at length said, without addressing any one in particular, "I am sure this man does not know what he says; he is demented I'm thinking." He then adverted to the little boy sitting by, and said that "he ought not to hear such things."

I have more than I wish I had of the English aversion to taking part in conversation with strangers in a coach; but as I saw that both our rustic and ranter were rather failing and sinking before the firm assurance of the young sceptic, I thought I ought to speak. So I said to him, "You seem, from your confident assertions, to know much about death—what *is* death?"

"Why, death," said he—"what is death? Why everybody knows that: it is when a man dies—ceases to live; and there is an end of him."

"But this," said I, "is no definition. You should at least define what you talk about so confidently. Else you attempt to argue from—you know not what; to draw a certainty from an uncertainty. Is not death," said I, "the dissolution of the body? Is not that what you mean by death?"

"Yes," said he, "that is it; it is the dissolution of the body."

"Well, then," I said, "are the body and the soul the same thing? Is the principle of thought, the same thing with the hand, or foot, or head?"

"To be sure it is not; and what then?" he rejoined.

"Why then," said I, "it follows that the dissolution of the body has nothing to do with the soul. The soul does not consist of materials that *can* be dissolved. Therefore death, while it passes over the body, does not, you see, as we define it—does not touch the soul."

He seemed something at a stand with this; but like many others in the same circumstances, he only began to repeat what he had already said with more vehement assertions and a louder tone. Meanwhile, there was a little by-play, in which he endeavoured to reassure the Scotch girl, with whom he had evidently ingratiated himself by very marked attention, telling her as she rather drew off from him, that it was all nothing; and that whatever he said, it was no matter; and that he was just like the rest of us. I was determined that the warning which had been given in that quarter, should not want what aid I could give it; and as I saw that the metaphysical argument was thrown away, I had recourse to a more practical one.

Resuming the conversation, therefore, I said, "You believe that there is a God: I think you have admitted this?"

"Yes—I do."

"And you believe that God made the world, do you not?"

"To be sure—I do."

"And you believe that he made man?"

"Certainly—of course."

"And you believe that he made man a social being, do you not?—that he constituted man, and made and meant him to dwell in families and in societies?"

"It would seem so; he was willing to admit it."

"Now, then," said I, "answer me one question. Do you believe that men could live either safely or happily in society, without any expectation of a future life? If this life were all, do you not think that you, and most men around you, would give yourselves up to all the pleasures that you could find here—to pleasures that it would cost you the least of effort and self-denial to obtain? Is it not evident and inevitable, taking men as they are, that all virtue, all self-discipline and restraint, all domestic purity, and all correct and temperate living, would fall with the doctrine of a future life?"

Somewhat to my surprise, he frankly confessed that he thought it would.

"Well, then," I said, "here is a very plain case; and I am willing to trust this *boy* with the argument. He can decide, and every one here can decide, between a belief that would confessedly destroy the happiness and improvement of the world, and the only belief that can sustain it. If God made society, he established the principles that are necessary to its welfare. And to assail these principles, is hostility at once to heaven and earth. It is as if a man would spread blight and mildew over these harvest fields, and starve the world to death!"

EDINBURGH, *July* 14.—I was never aware till I came to England, of the pre-eminence which Edinburgh is allowed to hold as a beautiful and imposing city. But on my route hither, I have been continually hearing of the glories of Edinburgh; and now, instead of being disappointed, I am ready to say that the half was not told me. You enter it from the west, through a suburb which, it is much to say, has nothing disa-

greeable in it—none of the usual accompaniments of dirty streets, vile, miserable houses, and squalid and suffering poverty. The *coup d'œil*, at your entrance, is on every side the most striking imaginable. Before you stretches Princes-street, wider than Broadway in New York, more than a mile long, lined on the left with noble ranges of buildings, bordered on the right, throughout its whole extent, with gardens, and terminated by Calton Hill, crowned with monuments. On the left, again, spreads the New Town, built in stone, and thrown into every graceful variety of forms—square, circle, and crescent. On the right is the Old Town, which is itself, in contrast to the other, one grand piece of antiquity. On this side of it towers the lofty crag on which the castle is built, and a little beyond it rise the heights of Salisbury Crag and Arthur's Seat.

July 15.—Edinburgh (Old Town) has a most singular and touching air of antiquity. It is to other cities what old ruins are to other dwellings. As you traverse some of those streets—the High-street, and Canongate, and the Cowgate—whose houses rise like towers, six or seven stories high, on either side, and reflect that the stream of existence has flowed through them for centuries, the same as now—with the same elements of human weal and wo mingled in it as now—with the same sounds—the din of business, the words of anger, or the tones of laughter, the cries of childhood, and the deep hum of stern and intent occupation—the same sounds reverberated from those weather-beaten walls as now: ay, and as you reflect that infuriated mobs have passed here, and the trampling footsteps of armies, and the sad funeral trains of successive generations—and that through these streets Queen Mary was brought after her defeat at Carberry Hill, in degradation, and disgrace, and tears—yes, and that here, upon these very pavements, Robertson, and Hume, and Mackenzie, and Burns, and Scott have walked; a holy air of antiquity seems to breathe from every wynd and close, and touching memories are inscribed upon every stone: it is difficult to preserve the decorum that belongs to a public walk, or to have patience with the indifference that familiarity has written upon the faces around you.

Yet all multitudes of men are themselves touching spectacles. And when I have stood on Calton Hill, and looked, as you *may* do, right down upon the sea of human dwellings in the New Town, I have felt an indescribable, painful, awful emotion—as if I laid my hand upon the very heart of the mighty city, and felt its heavings and throbbings—felt that life was there, and as if it were my own life, multiplied an hundred thousand times, in magnitude, intensity, and importance.

If I were asked what is the great charm about this Old World, and if I wished to generalize the answer, I should say, *it is antiquity*—antiquity in its castles, its towns, its cathedrals, its cities. The sublimity of ages is about you at every step, and you feel your connexion with past races of men, in a way that you are not naturally led to do in a country where there are no monuments of the past.

To-day, however, I saw a relic of the past in a very grotesque attitude; a Highlander in full dress—yes, the wild, fierce, haughty Highlander—playing on a fiddle! a street beggar, asking a few pence to keep him from starving. He was dressed in the philabeg, or kilts, and hose; and I am surprised to find that there are some Highland regiments, in the English service, who are dressed in this manner. I have seen some

of these soldiers, both here and in Glasgow, parading about in this dress —which, to describe it, is very like a petticoat hanging from the waist halfway down the leg, a hose coming up halfway on the calf—so that the person is naked from above the knee down to the middle of the calf. It appeared very uncomfortable, and scarcely decent. When George the Fourth visited Scotland, and held levee at Holyrood, he appeared in this costume. A picture of him is shown in the audience room.

July 17.—I went to-day to as many spots mentioned in Scott's stories as I could find, and afterward to Holyrood Palace. I was struck with the different effects produced upon the feelings by scenes of romance and scenes of real history. Around the former, indeed, there is a hallowing charm—the halo of genius rests there; but the history of actual events is, comparatively, as if genius itself were embodied in it. You feel that reality is there. Where Mary *really* suffered, shuddered, and wept—is one thing; where Effie Deans is *supposed* to have laid, albeit upon the cold stone, her broken heart, is quite another thing. We admire genius, but genius itself is only the interpreter of all-powerful nature. Or if it be said, that genius is a part of nature, and its noblest part, then take us where genius itself has wrought out its noblest achievement, or manifested its most sublime endurance, and we shall feel, indeed, that *there* is reality in its full sovereignty. The spot so consecrated may be the battle field; it may be the council chamber; it may be the martyr's stake; yes, and it may be the student's cell at Abbotsford, or on the Avon.

Yet as I strolled one day up Salisbury Crag, and down from Arthur's Seat, amid which are laid several of the scenes of the Heart of Mid-Lothian, I felt illusion, at some moments, to be almost as powerful as reality. I felt as if the light-hearted Effie, and the true-hearted Jeanie, and the stern-hearted old man, must have lived there; and that upon that hillside poor Madge must have sung her wild song, and Sharpitlaw and Ratton must have rushed down there towards Muschat's Cairn. The Cairn was situated immediately below St. Anthony's Chapel, some ruins of which still remain. I passed them as I came down from Arthur's Seat; a little spring of fresh and sweet water still bubbling up at the base of the old hermitage.

In the High-street is shown the house of John Knox — looking dark and stern as himself. On the corner, and under a sort of canopy, is a rudely sculptured bust of the old reformer, with the hand raised, and the finger pointed at the words—thus inscribed on the wall:—

Θεος
Deus
God.

On the opposite side of the street, on the front wall of the house, are two figures in stone, supposed to be of very ancient date, and to represent Adam and Eve. The Latin inscription is (trans.), "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

Holyrood.—Queen Mary's state-room, with the bed of Charles I. now standing in it; her bedroom, with her own bed in it; her dressing-room; the small apartment in which she, Rizzio, and some others, were supping, when Darnley, and Ruthven, with other lords, entered, dragged

Rizzio out, and murdered him before her face; the dark passage by which they came up; the blood at the head of the principal staircase, where they dragged him down; the partition by which that spot is cut off from the state-room, and apparently cut off for no other reason—thus giving colour to the tradition which alleges that this is the blood of Rizzio; the dressing-table of Mary, with raised work on it done by herself, and the wicker basket, raised on a sort of tripod, which held the infant wardrobe of her son;—these objects bring the unfortunate Mary before one, with a vividness that almost makes him feel as if he had now heard her story for the first time. It is a striking instance of the power of adventitious circumstances, to carry down a name, and almost to embalm it in the memory of ages. Had Mary been homely and happy, we should probably never have heard of her!

Edinburgh (Old Town) is very curious in one respect. There is a town under a town. The valleys are so deep, and the hills so high on which it is built, that bridges or causeways of stone are thrown across; and when you pass over them, you see houses and a street, and crowds passing—all directly beneath you.

Before breakfast, the morning on which I came away, I went to find St. Leonards—not having heard till the morning before that there was a spot so designated. I found it—a small crag; just beneath which and west of it is a cottage, sweetly situated, called St. Leonard's cottage. It is just on the borders of the city, on the side towards Salisbury Crag.

I took leave of Edinburgh; I gazed upon its glories and glorious objects for the last time, with a feeling that it seems to me I scarce shall feel again in leaving any foreign city.

Glasgow, *July* 20.—From Edinburgh, I have come round through the Highlands to this place. Every step of the way has been on classic ground: the beautiful windings of the Forth with the Grampian Hills on the north; Stirling Castle; the wild grandeur of the Trossacks; Ben Nevis and Ben Venue, and the haunted waters of Loch Katrine, every rock and headland garlanded with romance; the bold and majestic shores of Loch Lomond; the haunts of Rob Roy, the Lennox country, and the soft scenery of the Leven.

I passed the night at Cullender, twelve miles from Loch Katrine, and spent the evening in reading through the Lady of the Lake. About a mile and a half before reaching the lake, you enter the celebrated Trossacks, or the Bristled Territory. Conceive of two or three hundred hills, wild and precipitous, some higher, some lower, all covered with shrubbery, ivy, and heather, with often a bold "thunder-splintered pinnacle" shooting up from among them; conceive yourself walking through this region on a winding and almost level road, at the foot of these hills, with some new view opening, some striking object arresting you at every step as you proceed, and you may have some idea of that grand panorama of the picturesque—the Trossacks.

As you emerge from this valley of hills and mountains, Loch Katrine presents itself—a narrow strip of water at the first, and never, at any point, more than two miles wide. You are rowed, ten miles, through the length of the lake, and may spend some of your time, if you please, in fancying where the fair lady moored her bark, or where, under her magic guidance, it shot across the silver waters.

A walk of five miles, through a wild country, with some genuine Highland moors on the way, brings you to Inversnaid Mill, on the shore of Loch Lomond. The pass down to Inversnaid is so steep, and dark, and deep, that it seemed to me an hundred men might have been murdered there without being heard—Rob Roy must have held it as a favourite spot. There is a single cottage on the shore; and I entered it with a curiosity inspired by a thousand tales of romance. A Highland cottage, at the bottom of one of the wildest Highland passes!—what would it be, and what its inmates? I found a woman and her daughter, who told me that they had no neighbours, and exchanged no visits with anybody. There was no chimney. The smoke found its way out at a hole in the roof, but not till it had circulated in many eddies and wreaths around the beams and rafters, which were black and shining with soot. Along the wall adjoining that against which the fire was built—for there was properly no fireplace—were to be dimly seen the apartments or stories, one above another, of a sort of crib, such as Walter Scott has described, as answering the purpose of a bedstead. I asked the woman for food. She had nothing but oatmeal cake, which she produced, and I was glad to try a specimen of Highland bread. But, in good truth, I should never desire to have anything to do with it, save as a specimen; for of all stuff that ever I tasted, it was the most inedible, impracticable, insufferable,—dry, hard, coarse, rasping, gritty, chaffy: I *could* not eat it, and it seemed to me that if I could, it would be no more nourishing than gravel kneaded into mud and baked in a limekiln. As to drink, whiskey—whiskey, the boatmen said, was the only thing, and the thing indispensable. I tasted of it; and truly it had not the usual odious taste of our American whiskey. It is said that the peat, by which it is distilled, gives it a peculiar flavour.

As to the estimate of this article, or something like it—something "wet and toothsome," as the wretch Peter Peebles says—I should suppose that Highlands and Lowlands agree, nay, and all England for that matter—for I have never seen anything like the numbers of persons that I have observed here, after dinner, or in the evening, sipping their brandy and water or whiskey punch. It would seem strange to some of our American reformers; but I have been at supper, where the meal was introduced by the host with a "grace;" and the brandy and hot water were brought on at the close of the entertainment, evidently as a matter of course, and I was very much urged to take some, as a very excellent thing; and, indeed, as the conscientious Peebles says, "they had like to ha' guided me very ill."

From Inversnaid Mill a steamboat takes you up and down the entire length of Loch Lomond, thirty miles. A rainy day did not hide altogether the bold and majestic features of this shore and mountain scenery, though it prevented me from seeing it to the best advantage. Around the lower part of Loch Lomond is the country of the Lennox; from whence a ride through the vale of the Leven brings you to Dumbarton, where a steamboat again, at almost any hour, will take you up to Glasgow.

The cathedral here is a grand old pile; the only one that Knox spared, and which he still frowns upon from his monument in the cemetery on the opposite hill. And this last spot suggests the subject of funerals, which are celebrated with much pomp, as it appears to an

American taste, throughout the kingdom; the hearse bearing a sort of forest of waving plumes over it—white for the young, black for the elder—the carriages and horses put into as deep mourning as their owners. It would seem that there are entertainments on these occasions; for I saw over a shop here this singular advertisement—"Funeral and Fancy biscuit, for sale here."

Hamilton, *July* 23.—I have come down to Hamilton to-day, on my way to the Falls of the Clyde, Tweeddale, Abbotsford, &c. I have several times observed, as I did to-day, very tidy looking young women walking barefoot, and carrying a little parcel in hand, which was evidently the stockings and shoes. Indeed, neatness and thrift seem characteristic of the people everywhere. When there is no scenery to engage attention, Scotch husbandry, at least, is a pleasing feature of the landscape.

About two miles from Hamilton are the ruins of Bothwell Castle. The property now belongs to Lord Douglas, and the castle is situated just in the rear of his seat. And very few things have I seen equal to the beauty of its situation, on a bold, rounded, wooded bank of the Clyde, with the ruins of an old abbey on the opposite bank.

About half a mile from this is Bothwell Brig. The land slopes on each side of the river to the bridge, so that the two bodies of troops who fought here might, it is evident, be plainly in sight of each other, before engaging—as they are represented by Walter Scott. A fair vale spreads above, and below, the river winds between steep, rocky, and wooded banks, making altogether a scene fitted to rebuke the fierce passions that once drenched this spot with blood.

From Bothwell Brig, stretches fourteen miles, I was told, up the banks of the Clyde, the estate of the Duke of Hamilton. I went to the palace. It has one noble portico; but mostly it is low and inelegant, though immense—looking altogether more like several blocks and squares of fine buildings in a city than anything else. I should suppose the possessor might easily entertain some hundred or two of guests. I observed not much less than a hundred bells in *one* of the lower entries. The furniture was much of it old, but exceedingly rich, mosaics, ebony cabinets, carved work, &c. The ceilings beautifully gilt, and that of the picture gallery exceedingly splendid—approaching the dazzling appearance of the back of a diamond beetle as seen under the microscope. It was this gallery chiefly that I came to see. But I was very much disappointed. There are some paintings said to be of the old masters, but put in such bad lights that it is scarcely conceivable that they should be worth much. There is an original Bonaparte of David—a fine countenance, and more natural, easy, amiable, and even more handsome than is usual in the portraits and busts of him. The gallery consists chiefly of common-place looking men and fair women—mostly Hamiltons; but the *chef d'œuvre* is a Rubens—Daniel in the Lions' Den. The lions I thought were very good, but I did not like the face of the Daniel. It is pale and livid, and shows fright or distress full as much as reliance. If it is trust, it is the agony, and not the repose of trust. Some may think it surprising that a traveller, raw from the New World, should undertake to criticise a painting. But I say that the painter is to be judged by the general eye, as truly as the orator, and so shall I go on my way criticising as if I had been brought

up at the feet of Raphael—criticising, *i. e.* not the technical things of the art—not the mixing of colours, or drawing, or perspective—but criticising the general effect. If the painter means to strike the general mind, the general mind must be his judge.

Lanark, *July* 24.—The ride from Hamilton to Lanark is full of beauties. But the Falls of Clyde here are most beautiful. Whether they are as well worth visiting as the Giant's Causeway and the Trossacks, I will not say; but certainly they raise the emotion of pleasure higher than either. Stoney Byers below is well enough; but the chief beauty is above, at Corralinn and Bonnington.

We left Tillietudlem, three miles from Lanark, on the right, two miles from the road, and out of sight. I am told an old woman near there was very much vexed by the inquiries of rambling visiters, after the publication of Old Mortality. She could not conceive what sent all these people, all at once, asking about Tillietudlem.

July 25, 26. *From Lanark, through Peebles, to St. Ronans.*—St. Ronans is a neat village; and about half a mile distant, at the foot of one of the hills which surround it on all sides, is St. Ronans' Well; but nothing could I hear of any place or ruin called Mowbray Castle.

About twenty miles from Lanark, you strike the Tweed, and thence the road to Kelso is chiefly through the vale of the Tweed. It is mostly narrow, and hemmed in on both sides by high, heathery hills. Tweeddale, I believe, is the northern confine of the Border-land. Three or four old ruins of castles are to be seen on the road; making the appearance of a chain of castles.

The great objects to-day (the twenty-sixth), and enough to make any day remarkable, are—Abbotsford, Melrose Abbey, and Dryburgh Abbey.

Abbotsford takes its name from a ford over the Tweed, near at hand, which formerly belonged to the abbots—of some neighbouring monastery, I suppose. It is well worth visiting, independently of the associations, which make it what it is—what no other place can be. The structure too—the apartments—the furniture—are altogether in keeping with those associations. Everything is just what you would have it, to commemorate Walter Scott. The building is a beautiful Gothic structure. You will not expect a description from me of what has been already so minutely and so well described. You remember the hall of entrance, with its stained windows, and its walls hung round with ancient armour, coats of mail, shields, swords, helmets—all of them, as an inscription imports, of the "auld time;" the dining and the drawing-rooms; the library and the study; the curiosities of the place—choice paintings, curious old chairs of carved work—the rare cabinet of relics, Rob Roy's musket, pistols from the dread holsters of Claverhouse and Bonaparte—and all surrounded and adorned with oaken wainscoting—and ceilings, the latter very beautifully carved, yet very simple—everything, indeed, wearing the appearance of great dignity and taste: well, I have seen it all—I have seen it! But the study! before the desk at which he wrote, in the very chair, the throne of power from which he stretched out a sceptre over the world, and over all ages, I sat down—it was enough! I *went* to see the cell of the enchanter—I saw it; and my homage—was silence, till I had ridden miles from that abode of departed genius.

I am tempted here to give you an anecdote, which has been mentioned to me since I came to Europe. An American lady of distinguished intelligence, had the good fortune to meet with Scott frequently in Italy, till she felt emboldened to express to him something of the feeling that she entertained about his works. She told him, that in expressing her gratitude, she felt that she expressed that of millions. She spoke of the relief which he had brought to the heavy and weary days of languor and pain; and said, that no day so dark had ever risen upon her, that it was not brightened by the prospect of reading another of his volumes. And what, now, do you think was his reply? A tear rolled down his cheek: he *said nothing!* Was it not beautiful? For you feel that that tear testified more than selfish gratification; that it was the silent witness of religious gratitude.

I must pass by the well-known and often-described beauty of Melrose Abbey, three miles from Abbotsford, and ask you to go on with me a few miles farther to Dryburgh—the place where "the wreck of power" (intellectual) is laid down to rest. If I were to choose the place of his body's repose, from all that I have ever seen, it would be this. The extent, antiquity, and beauty of the work; the trees growing within the very walls of the abbey; the luxuriant shrubbery waving from the tops of the walls and from parts of the roof here and there remaining; the ivy, covering over the work of ghastly ruin, and making it graceful—hanging from "the rifted arches and shafted windows," and weaving festoons from one broken fragment to another; the solemn, umbrageous gloom of the spot; the perpetual sound of a waterfall in the neighbouring Tweed—all conspire to make this spot wonderfully romantic; it throws a spell over the mind, such as no other ruin does that I have seen. Conway Castle is more sublime: Melrose Abbey is more beautiful in its well preserved, sculptured remains; but Dryburgh is far more romantic. What place can be so fit to hold the remains of *Walter Scott!*

Before crossing the Tweed, and while yet on Scottish ground, I wish to drop one thought which I have carried more than seven years, I believe, without ever finding the proverb to avail me at all. And that is on the striking resemblance between the character of Scotland and of New England. The energy and vehemence of the Scottish character, the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*, is universally acknowledged. *Fier comme un Ecossais*, is a proverb. And yet the Scotch are accounted a singularly wary and cautious people; reserved in manners, exact in speech, guarded in communication, and keen and close in the transaction of business. The Scotchman has the singular fortune to stand as a proverb for the most opposite qualities, and I suppose that they really exist in him. The same qualities are found in the New England character. The Yankee—"it will not deny"—is sharp at a bargain. He is cold in manners. The deep reserve of a New England boy, especially if living retired in the country, perhaps no one can understand who has not experienced it. It seems as if his heart were girded with a stronger band than any other, and certainly such as is not natural or befitting to the ingenuousness of youth. I do not wonder that the result of a cursory observation has been, to pronounce the New Englander a being, to whom "nature has given a double portion of brains and half a heart." And yet nothing could be more untrue.

The New England character is, in fact, one of the deepest excitement and enthusiasm. The whole history of the people proves this, from the Landing at Plymouth to this hour. Every species of enterprise, political, commercial, literary, religious, has been developed in New England to a degree, I am inclined to think, unprecedented in the world. All America is filled with the proofs of it. And private life in New England will exhibit the same character to all who become intimate with it. The two races whom I am comparing have also had the same fate of general misconstruction and opprobrium. The Scot is regarded, on the south side of the Tweed, very much as the Yankee is, south of the Hudson. I will not inquire into the causes of this; but it certainly seems a very hard case on either hand. A people in both instances, industrious, virtuous, religious, almost beyond example — carrying popular education to a point of improvement altogether unexampled in the world, till the Prussian system appeared—and furnishing far more than their respective quotas to the noblest literature of their respective countries—would seem to have deserved more respect than has been awarded to Scotland and New England.

CHAPTER IV.

ENGLAND — YORK — THE MINSTER — CHURCHES AND CHURCH BUILDING — YORKSHIRE DIALECT — AMERICANISMS — ASPECT OF THE COUNTRY COMPARED WITH OURS — KENDAL — WINDERMERE — AMBLESIDE — A CONVERSATION ON ENGLISH AND AMERICAN POLITICS — VISIT TO GRASSMERE — PONY RIDE AMONG THE LAKES — KESWICK — ULLSWATER — THE LAKE SCENERY.

York, *July* 29.—From Dryburgh, I came through Kelso, Newcastle, and Durham, down to York.

After a delightful ride on the banks of the Tweed, leaving the vale of the Teviot, and the Cheviot hills, on the south, I entered England, nine miles below Kelso.

In Northumberland, on the road to Newcastle, I passed several extensive moors, very like the country described by Scott as surrounding Osbaldiston Hall.

As you approach Newcastle, it becomes evident that you are in the region of collieries. "The smoke of the country goeth up as the smoke of a furnace." It is not the smoke of its destruction, however. It is the indication of life, and not of death—ay, and of life that has gone down far into the bowels of the earth; for it proceeds from the chimneys of steam engines, employed at every pit, for the double purpose of pumping out water and raising coal.

Durham.—The cathedral, one of the finest in England, and the castle, now the bishop's palace, I could not stop to examine.

York is a queer old place, worth coming a good many miles to see for its own sake. But the minster!—it is worth a pilgrimage to see it. It is the only building I have ever seen in a city that stands up and out so completely from the surrounding mass of buildings, that it is, from every quarter, distinctly presented to the eye. The minster, amid the city of York, stands like the elephant in a menagerie. Its propor-

tions, too, are so perfect, its character is so unique, that it makes upon the mind one single impression. You take in the whole object, and feel all its overpowering grandeur, at the first glance of the eye. And yet it seems to me, that if I were to live in sight of it a thousand years it would lose none of the indescribable charm with which it first entranced me. Indeed I shall attempt no description. I dare not bring my measurements here. Nay, it appears to me that the impression here does not depend on any exact idea of size or of parts. It is a whole; it makes its impression as a whole; and you can no more receive that impression from the successive sentences of a description, than you could receive it from contemplating, in succession, the different parts of the structure itself.

There is a sanctity and venerableness about many of the English churches, and even those of the humblest order, which nothing but time indeed can give to the churches of our country, but which time will never give to them, unless we learn to build them with more durable materials than wood or brick. There is something in these churches which leads you instinctively to take off your hat when you enter them —a duty, by the bye, of which your attendant is sure to admonish you, if you fail of it—and I would that the practice were more common than it is among us. The sentiment of reverence for holy places is certainly gaining ground upon the old Puritan and Presbyterian prejudice on this head, and it must grow with the increasing refinement of the people. But still, there are too many churches, especially in our country towns, which are in a state of shameful disrepair, and of abominable filthiness; and which are constantly trampled under the feet of the multitude, at every election. Indeed, the condition and use, and, I may add, the architecture of a church, cannot fail to have a direct effect upon the sentiment of religious veneration; and I trust the time is to come, when (with reference to this last point) the construction of churches among us will be given into the hands of competent architects, and not left to the crude and ambitious devices of parish committees. It costs no more to build in good proportions than in bad; and the trifling expense of obtaining a plan from an able architect (not a mere carpenter) is unworthy to have any weight in a matter of such permanent importance to a whole community. The churches of a country are a part of its religious literature. They speak to the people; they convey ideas; they make impressions. The Catholics understand this, and are erecting, I believe, more fine churches in America, in proportion to their numbers, than any other denomination among us.

I confess that if I could build a church in all respects to suit my own taste, I would build it in the solemn and beautiful style of the churches of England, the Gothic style; and I would build it in enduring stone, that it might gather successive generations within its holy walls, that passing centuries might shed their hallowing charm around it, that the children might worship where their fathers had worshipped from age to age, and feel as if the spirits of their fathers still mingled in their holy rites. Nay, more do I say, and further would I go—I am not speaking, of course, as proposing anything, but only as individually preferring it—but I say for myself that I would place altars in that church, where prayers might be said daily, where daily resort might be had by all whose inclination prompted; so that whosoever passed by

might have liberty, at any hour of the day, to turn aside from his business, his occupation, his care, or his leisurely walk—in his sorrow, or his joy, or his anxiety, or his fear, or his desire, and want, and trouble, and temptation, so often besetting the steps of every mortal life—to turn aside, I say, and bow down amid the awful stillness of the sanctuary. Let it not be said, as detracting from the importance of the religious architecture of a country, or as an apology for neglect or irreverence towards churches, that all places are holy—that the universe is the temple of God. It is true, indeed, that the whole frame of nature is a temple for worship, but is it a mean or an unadorned temple? Nay, what a structure is it! and what a glorious adorning is put upon it, to touch the springs of imagination and feeling, and to excite the principle of devotion! What painted or gilded dome is like that arch of blue, "that swells above us"? What blaze of clustered lamps, or even burning tapers, is like the lamp of day hung in the heavens, or the silent and mysterious lights that burn for ever in the far off depths of the evening sky? And what are the splendid curtains with which the churches of Rome are clothed for festal occasions, to the gorgeous clouds that float around the pavilion of morning, or the tabernacle of the setting sun? And what mighty pavement of tesselated marble can compare with the green valleys, the enamelled plains, the whole variegated, broad, and boundless pavement of this world's surface, on which the mighty congregation of the children of men are standing? What, too, are altars reared by human hands, compared with the everlasting mountains—those altars in the temple of nature; and what incense ever arose from human altars, like the bright and beautiful mountain mists that float around those eternal heights, and then rise above them and are dissolved into the pure and transparent ether—like the last fading shadows of human imperfection, losing themselves in the splendours of heaven? And what voice ever spoke from human altar, like the voice of the thunder from its cloudy tabernacle on those sublime heights of the creation, when

> "Not from one lone cloud,
> But every mountain height hath found a tongue,
> And Jura answers from her misty shroud,
> Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud"?

And, in fine, what anthem or pæan ever rolled from organ or orchestra, or from the voice of a countless multitude, like the dread and deafening roar of ocean, with all its swelling multitude of waves? Yes, the temple of nature is full of inspiration, full of objects that inspire devotion, and so, as far as may be, should our temples of prayer and thanksgiving be made.

To say, as if to detract from the sanctity of religious edifices, that here, after all, is only so much wood, and stone, and mortar, which are nothing but the same mass of materials in any other form, or devoted to any other purpose—why we talk not so of our homes—we talk not so of nature—we talk so of nothing else. It is by mixing up intellectual and spiritual associations with things, and only so, that they have any interest or importance to our minds. Things are nothing but what the mind makes them to be—nothing but by an infusion into them of the intellectual principle of our own nature. The tuft that is shorn

from the warrior's plume by the scythe of death, is nothing else, if one pleases so to consider it, but the plumage of a bird. The relic of a sainted martyr—suppose it were a hem of his garment—is, if one pleases so to consider it, nothing else but a piece of cloth that protected him from the winter's cold, or the summer's heat. The place where his broken and lacerated body was laid down to rest, may be accounted common earth; and the mouldering remains of a buried empire, may be accounted common dust. The Palatine hill on which stood the palace of the imperial Cæsars, and which is now covered with its ruins, may be accounted a common hill. But so do we not speak of things, nor think of them.

No, let us yield to that principle of our nature which imparts a portion of its own character to the things around us; which, with a kind of creative power, *makes* times, and seasons, and places to be holy; which gathers a halo of glory and beauty over our native land; which accounts the maxim devoutly true, that "there is no place like home;" and which hallows "the place where prayer is wont to be made"—which accounts no place like it—and yet so accounting it, judges that to be a good work, which makes the temples of a nation's worship strong and beautiful, for the use and admiration of successive ages.

KENDAL, *July* 29.—From York, through Tadcaster, Leeds, covered with the smoke of its factories, Bradford, a thriving town, Keighley, Skipton, &c. to Kendal—a fine country: the vales successively of the Wharf, the Aire, and the Lune.

The language—the vulgar dialect, that is—of Yorkshire, and Lancashire, too, is almost as unintelligible to me as Chinese. The English critics upon our barbarous Americanisms, might well reserve their comments, and as many more as they can produce, for home consumption. They are troubled with a most patronising and paternal anxiety, lest the English language should be lost among our common people; it *is* lost among the common people of Yorkshire. They smile at our blunders when we say *sick* for *ill*, and *fine* instead of *nice*. They say that *fine* comes from the milliner's shop; we might reply that *nice* comes from the kitchen. They are shocked when we speak of a *fine* building; but nothing is more common in England, than to hear of the grandest old ruin in the kingdom as "a *nice* old place." As to the word *sick*, it is ours and not the English use * that accords with the standard usage of English literature; sick, afflicted with disease—is Johnson's definition.

One thing that gives this country its peculiarity of aspect as compared with ours, is the substitution of stone in all structures where we use wood—as stone houses, barns, outhouses of all sorts, stone bridges, stone watering-troughs by the way-side. The smallest stream or ditch crossing the road has a stone bridge. All this gives an air of antiquity, durability, and, if I may say so, of dignity, to the whole country. Another circumstance that has the same effect, is the practice of calling many of the farms from generation to generation by the same name. It is not Mr. Such or Such an one's place—at least that is not the only designation—but it is Woodside, or Oakdale, or some of those unpronounceable Welsh names. I like this. It invests every dwelling in the

* For sickness of stomach.

country with local associations. It gives to every locality a dignity and interest, far beyond that of mere property or possession.

July 30.—This morning, the finest I have seen since I landed at Liverpool, I left Kendal for Windermere. Stopped at Bowness and took a boat—visited the *Station*, a romantic eminence on the opposite side of the lake; then rowed up the lake eight miles to Ambleside, the head of Windermere. The head, and the views from the Station, are far the most beautiful things about the lake; and, indeed, they are the *only* things very *striking* about it.

What a power lies in association! I was already in sight of the far-famed Windermere, and almost any tract of water and landscape would have appeared lovely under such a sky—surely this did; yet, as I stopped to pick a few raspberries by the hedge, that simple action—the memories that it brought with it—the thoughts of those hours of my early days, passed near my own native home—passed by those hedges, thronging ever since with a thousand inexpressible recollections—passed in the fond romance of youth, amid the holy silence of the fields, and all the thick-coming fancies of an unworn imagination and sensibility—all this moved me as no scene of mere abstract beauty could ever do! And yet, indeed, what is abstract? What is nature but an instrument harmonized into unison with something in us—every vibration of which either awakens or answers to some thrilling chord, in the more mysterious frame of our own being? What is the traveller but a pilgrim of the heart, the imagination, the memory? Such a little passage, now and then, as this to-day, convinces one that there is much poetry in boyhood, though one does not find it out, perhaps, till long afterward.

From Ambleside I took a pony and rode to Rydal Mount, the residence of Mr. W——.*

I was so much disappointed in the appearance of Mr. W—— that I actually began to suspect that I had come to the cottage of one of his neighbours. After ten minutes' common-place talk about the weather, the travelling, &c. had passed, I determined to find out whether I was mistaken; and aware of his deep interest in the politics of England, I availed myself of some remark that was made, to introduce that subject. He immediately left all common-place, and went into the subject with a flow, a flood almost of conversation that soon left me in no doubt. After this had gone on an hour or two, wishing to change the theme, I took occasion of a pause to observe, that in this great political agitation, poetry seemed to have died out entirely. He said it had; but that was not the only cause; for there had been, as he thought, some years ago, an over-production and a surfeit.

Mr. W—— converses with great earnestness, and has a habit, as he

* I depart here from the rule I have laid down to myself—not to draw any details of private society into this journal—for three reasons.

The first is, that the conversations which I take the liberty to quote in this place, relate principally to one of the very subjects for the discussion of which I have been tempted to publish the present volumes. The next is, that the sentiments here advanced on the part of the individual referred to, are his *well-known* sentiments—so that nothing is betrayed. And the third reason is, that they are so well advanced, and so ably advocated, that I think the exposition of them could not disturb or displease that distinguished person—even if such a fugitive sheet as mine should ever be wafted so far as to fall on the still and deep waters of his meditation.

walks and talks, of stopping every fourth or fifth step, and turning round to you to enforce what he is saying. The subjects, the first evening I passed with him, were, as I have said, politics and poetry. He remarked afterward that although he was known to the world only as a poet, he had given twelve hours' thought to the condition and prospects of society, for one to poetry. I replied that there appeared to me to be no contradiction in this, since the spirit of poetry is the spirit of humanity—since sympathy with humanity, and with all its fortunes, is an essential characteristic of poetry—and politics is one of the grandest forms under which the welfare of the human race presents itself.

In politics, Mr. W—— professes to be a reformer, but upon the most deliberate plan and gradual scale; and he indulges in the most indignant yet argumentative diatribes against the present course of things in England, and in the saddest forebodings of what is to come. The tide is beating now against aristocracy and an established religion, and if it prevails, anarchy and irreligion must follow. He will see no other result; he has no confidence in the people; they are not fit to govern themselves—not yet certainly; public opinion, the foolish opinion of the depraved, ignorant, and conceited mass, ought not to be the law; it ought not to be expressed in law; it ought not to be represented in government; the true representative government should represent the *mind* of a country, and that is not found in the mass, nor is it to be expressed by universal suffrage. Mr. W—— constantly protested against the example of America, as not being in point. He insisted that the state of society, the crowded population, the urgency of want, the tenures of property, in England, made a totally different case from ours. He seemed evidently to admit, though he did not in terms, that hereditary rank and an established priesthood, are indefensible in the broadest views of human rights and interests; but the argument for them is, that they cannot be removed without opening the door to greater evils—to the unrestrained licence of the multitude—to incessant change, disorder, uncertainty, and finally, to oppression and tyranny. He says the world is running mad with the notion that all its evils are to be relieved by political changes, political remedies, political nostrums—whereas the great evils, sin, bondage, misery, lie deep in the heart, and nothing but virtue and religion can remove them; and upon the value, and preciousness, and indispensableness of religion, indeed, he talked very sagely, earnestly, and devoutly.

The next evening I went to tea to Mr. W——'s, on an hospitable invitation to come to breakfast, dinner, or tea, as I liked. The conversation very soon again ran upon politics. He thought there could be no independence in legislators who were dependant for their places upon the ever-wavering breath of popular opinion, and he wanted my opinion about the fact in our country. I replied, that as a secluded man, and accustomed to look at the *morale* of these matters, I certainly had felt that there was likely to be, and probably was, a great want of independence—that I had often expressed the apprehension that our distinguished men were almost necessarily acting under biasses that did not permit them to sit down in their closets and examine great political questions and measures, in a fair and philosophical spirit. Then, he said, how can there be any safety? I answered, as I had frequently said before, that our only safety lay in making the people wise: but I

added that our practical politicians were accustomed to say, that there was a principle of safety in our conflicts, in the necessarily conflicting opinions of the mass—that they neutralised and balanced each other, I admitted, however, that there was danger; that all popular institutions involved danger; that freedom was a trust and a perilous trust. Still I insisted that this was only an instance of a general principle; that all probation was perilous; that the greatest opportunity was always the greatest peril. I maintained also, that think as we might of political liberty, there was no helping it; that in the civilized world, the course of opinion was irresistibly setting towards universal education and popular forms of government; and nothing was to be done but to direct, modify, and control the tendency. He fully admitted this; said that in other centuries some glorious results might be brought out, but that he saw nothing but darkness, disorder, and misery in the immediate prospect, and that all he could do was to cast himself on Providence. I ventured to suggest that it seemed to me that all good and wise men had a work to do. I said that I admitted, friend to popular institutions as I was, that the world was full of errors about liberty; that there was a mistake and madness about popular freedom, as if it were the grand panacea for all human ills, and that powerful pens were needed to guide the public mind; and that the pen of genius could scarcely be more nobly employed. But he has no confidence in the body of the people, in their willingness to read what is wholesome, or to do what is right; and this, I took the liberty to say, seemed to me the radical point on which he and I differed. I told him that there were large communities in America in whom I did confide, and that I believed other communities might be raised up to the same condition; and that it appeared to me that it should be the grand effort of the world now, to raise up this mass to knowledge, to comfort, and virtue—since the mass was evidently ere long to rule for us.

After this conversation, Mr. W——proposed a walk to Grassmere Lake, to see it after sunset; and in that loveliest of all the scenes I ever witnessed on earth, were lost all thoughts but of religion and poetry. I could not help saying, with fervent sincerity, "I thank you, sir, for bringing me here, at this hour;" for he had evidently taken some pains, pushing aside some little interferences with his purpose, to accomplish it. He said in reply, that so impressive was the scene to him, that he felt almost as if it were a sin not to come here every fair evening. We sat by the shore half an hour, and talked of themes far removed from the strife of politics. The village on the opposite side lay in deep shadow; from which the tower of the church rose, like heaven's sentinel on the gates of evening. A single taper shot its solitary ray across the waters. The little lake lay hushed in deep and solemn repose. Not a sound was heard upon its shore. The fading light trembled upon the bosom of the waters, which were here slightly ruffled, and there lay as a mirror to reflect the serenity of heaven. The dark mountains lay beyond, with every varying shade that varying distance could give them. The farthest ridges were sowed with light, as if it were resolved into separate particles and showered down into the darkness below, to make it visible. The mountain side had a softness of shadowing upon it, such as I never saw before, and such as no painting I ever saw, approached in the remotest degree. It seemed, Mr. W—— said, as if

it were "*clothed* with the air." Above all, was the clear sky, looking almost cold, it looked so pure, along the horizon —but warmed in the region a little higher, with the vermillion tints of the softest sunset. I am persuaded that the world might be travelled over without the sight of one such spectacle as this—and all owing to the circumstances—the time—the hour. It was perhaps not the least of those circumstances influencing the scene, that it was an hour, passed in one of his own holy retreats, with Wordsworth!

Amid these lakes and mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland, nature seems to delight herself in contrasts, and that, as in many human works, is here perhaps the secret of power: the wildest mountains and mountain crags, with the sweetest valleys and dales amid them—as Borrowdale, Patterdale, Langdale, and sometimes one little sheltered spot, all verdure, only large enough for one farm—as in coming from Conniston through one of the Langdales; the roughest passes through mountain defiles, opening suddenly upon smooth and green vales, as in going from Buttermere to Borrowdale, or entering Patterdale from the south; a lake and a valley beneath your eye, and a world of mountains beyond, as in entering Keswick from the south: and then, when were ever seen such crystal streams—waters of such transparent and living purity!

All this, to be sure, is mere memorandum; but for the same purpose I will take up half a page with marking my route, which was adopted on competent advice, and may possibly be of service to some friend who shall follow me—which friend I advise to take for his excursion, as I did, a pony at Ambleside. From Ambleside, then, I went to Conniston and back—a day's ride; then to Keswick; thence, a day's excursion, around through Newlands, by Buttermere, and Honister Crag—through Borrowdale, by the Bowder Stone—an immense rock, evidently fallen from the precipice above, sixty-two feet long, thirty-six high, eighty-nine round, weight, 1,971 tons—by Lowdore Falls, a little *nothing* for a fall—as were all the falls I went to see about here—scarcely any water, but a romantic little scene; back to Keswick by the shore of Derwent Water. This is the most beautiful part of the ride; the bold wooded islands in the lake, with the glades and cultivated swells beyond appearing between them, and Skiddaw in the back ground.

From Keswick to Lyulph's Tower on Ullswater—the first view of Ullswater very striking; the waters very dark; a dark, leaden-coloured mountain rising up from the very edge of the water—a fine ride along down the shore, four miles, to Patterdale—through Patterdale, back to Ambleside. On the whole, perhaps, Ullswater presents more impressive scenery than any other lake. The scenery certainly is more bold.

Nothing can exceed the beauty of the cottages, and of their situations about these lakes. So also the sail-boats, passing in all directions, seen among the wooded islands and shooting out from behind the headlands, freighted with beauty, and mirth, and music, communicate an inexpressible life and charm to the scenery. And I fancy that such tokens of social happiness are very necessary to give these scenes the power they have, over the heart and imagination. It fills up the measure of the contrast. But that is not it—or it is not all. These signs of humanity and happiness make the scene image to us ourselves, as well as the Supreme Power. In the unvisited wilds of nature, in dell and

grot, in grove and greensward untrodden by the footsteps of men, the mind is prone to imagine that fairy creatures walk; poetry has peopled them with life; the strong sympathy of the soul calls upon the whole creation to give it back the image of itself.

August 3.—I left the lake country and came down to Kendal.

The ride from Kendal to Lancaster is a pleasant one, especially about the banks of the Kent. At Lancaster is a castle, now turned into a jail, which belonged to the house of Lancaster, and was built in the reign of Edward III. The central tower, the only portion of the old castle remaining, is square, and huge enough to have belonged to

"Old John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster."

It is called John of Gaunt's Chair. Appropriately to this title, there is from the top of the tower a very delightful prospect. A fine symbol of office for an old baronial sovereign—patriarch, chieftain, landlord, all in one; a tower for his chair, where he sits, a king farmer, to overlook the rich globe, pasture and valley. Those forms of power, with the rough and stern-hearted times that gave them birth, are passing away. May other and nobler forms arise to take their place!

CHAPTER V.

RAILWAY FROM LIVERPOOL — MANCHESTER — DERBYSHIRE — CHATSWORTH — HADDON HALL — MATLOCK — SCENERY AND GUIDES — WILLERSLEY CASTLE — LICHFIELD — BIRMINGHAM — MUSIC HALL — CONCERTS IN AMERICA — KENILWORTH — WARWICK — STRATFORD ON AVON — SHAKSPEARE.

Railway from Liverpool. The tunnel disappointed me. It is not so great a work as I expected—not so long. The motion on the railway is so rapid as to set everything in the country about—houses, trees, groves—dancing a waltz. It seems as if the whole surrounding creation were revolving in circles—the distant objects going one way, and those nearest, the opposite way.

Manchester — wrapped in the cloud of smoke proceeding from its innumerable manufactories. For the sole power is steam here; every factory has its engine and its high chimney, sending out its dense black volume of smoke, as it were, in the very face of the pure heavens—which foul mass of sulphurous vapours descends into the streets, infesting the nostrils, choking the lungs, blearing the sight, clouding the vista, so that sometimes you can scarce see an hundred yards.

They say it rains oftener in Manchester than in any other place in the kingdom. I should think it. And, indeed, I have several times heard it observed of one city and another, that it rains oftener in them than in the surrounding country. So far as appearances are concerned, and, I think, comfort too, it is fortunate for *our* cities that the anthracite coal is to be the staple fuel.

Bakewell in Derbyshire, *August* 6.—In approaching Derbyshire, you leave the immense levels of Lancashire for a more diversified and beautiful country, and when you *enter* this country, the limestone cliffs, with deep hollows and vales worn between, appear everywhere—marking the country of the Peak.

It must be, I think, that the body of people in this country, the nine-tenths, are less intelligent than the same body in our country. I certainly find more well-dressed and well-behaved people here who are ignorant, to an extent that would shame such looking people in America. For instance, I heard a very self-sufficient Scotchman here this evening, boasting of Walter Scott as his countryman, and yet very soon saying, that the scene of one of his novels could not be in Derbyshire, because *none* of them was laid in England.* I have heard very plain, hard-working people in America, in the conversation of the bar-room, quote Locke and Stewart. There are not so many books here—in the taverns, in the farmhouses, in the houses of the common people, on the shelves everywhere—as there are among us.

Have I spoken of women, working in the fields? Not in Ireland, nor in Wales only, but in Scotland and in England, this is constantly seen: not in harvest only—but they hoe, and dig, and delve, in all fields and at all seasons—sometimes four, five, ten—nay, twenty I have seen in a field. It must tend to give them a rough and coarse character; to their persons it certainly does.

While at Bakewell, I visited Chatsworth, the seat of the Duke of Devonshire, and Haddon Hall, an ancient and deserted castle, on the estates of the Duke of Rutland; one, five miles, and the other two miles distant.

Chatsworth is an immense castle, of the Ionic order, the oldest part built round a hollow square—the new part, a continuation, one story lower, of the rear-block or portion of the pile; and so extensive, that, when finished, there is to be a suite of rooms, through the whole of which the eye will range, at a single view, six hundred feet. The hall of entrance is from the hollow square; the sides and ceiling painted in fresco, by Verrio and La Guerre. The ceilings, also, of the whole range of staterooms, on the second story, are painted in the same style, by the same artists. The designs are mythological. There cannot be less, in all, I should think, than five hundred figures—of gods and goddesses, in every possible attitude and predicament—pursuing, flying, fighting, making love, &c. As far as one can judge, who almost breaks his neck in looking upward, and looking at objects eighteen feet distant, the paintings, many of them, are beautifully executed. What must have become, by the bye, of the necks and brains of the artists, looking upward while painting such an immense number of figures, I do not know. I must say that to my simple American taste, if not to any other taste, this appears to be a very improper exhibition—the forms being, generally, represented without any costume. The housekeeper, however, observed that these rooms now were never *used* on any occasion.

I must just make a memorandum of some other things that struck me in going over the house. In the range of staterooms, the sculpture, by Cibber, of the alabaster and marble doorways, and the carving, by Gibbon, throughout are beautiful; but of the latter especially, the carving of birds, over and around the fireplace in the principal stateroom, quite exceeds anything of the kind I have seen, or could have conceived. There is a large number of paintings, but nothing that

* Only an instance I allow.

struck me much—a Henry VIII. by Holbein; a Holy Family, by Murillo; a piece by Salvator Rosa, but in so bad a light as to be lost, if it is anything. There are a great many statues. Canova's Hebe is here, and a copy of the Venus de Medici by Bartolini.

Chatsworth is situated on the Derwent, on a rising ground, with terraces before it, formed by walls of wrought stone, which walls are surmounted by balustrades of stone. There is a finely wooded hill in the rear. The view southward, through grand avenues of trees, of the vale of the Derwent, is most beautiful.

In the conservatory, there were splendid specimens of the India rubber plant and the fan palm; and there was the curious nepenthes (pitcher plant), which at the end of every branch has an actual pitcher growing, large enough to hold more than half a wineglass of water—said pitcher nicely fitted with a lid.*

In the park were immense herds of cattle and of deer. The park is fourteen miles round; besides which the Duke of Devonshire has large possessions in this neighbourhood. As I turned away from the fine range of buildings, the smooth-shaven grounds, the gay flower-beds on the terraces, fenced round with chiselled stone, the noble groves, with the water of two or three fountains rising and falling in spray amid them, the vast range of the park, with the Derwent flowing through it, and above all, the rich and magnificent view southward, I thought that nothing could be more beautiful. But I had soon to correct my impression; for Haddon Hall is more beautifully situated; and Willersly Castle, Mr. Arkwright's seat, near Matlock, leaves it, in natural scenery, almost out of comparison.

Haddon Hall, two miles from Bakewell, on the way to Matlock, is a very ancient seat, on a somewhat precipitous bank of the Wye. It has been built in successive periods by different families—the Peverils, the Avenels, the Vernons, and lastly, the family of Manners. There are two hollow squares, and some towers. The whole is in great preservation, and especially the tapestry. In the dress of some of the figures wrought into the tapestry, are seen the fashion, and several of the varieties, too, of the modern ladies' sleeve. I had thought before that it was entirely a modern monster. But it seems that there is nothing new under the sun. There is a large dancing hall, with a finely carved oaken wainscoting and cornice—in which Queen Elizabeth led down the first measure. This hall was to-day put to a use which, amid de-

* The reader may be pleased to see the following beautiful description of this plant from the French of Richard:—

"Nepenthes sont tout originaires de l'Inde ou de l'isle de Madagascar. Leurs *feuilles* se terminent à leur sommet par un long filament qui porte une sorte d'urne creuse, d'une forme variable dans les diverses espèces, et recouverte à son sommet par un opercule qui s'ouvre et se ferme naturellement. Ces urnes ont toujours causé l'admiration de voyageurs, par le phénomène singulier qu'elles présentent. En effet, on le trouve presque constamment remplies d'une eau pure, claire, limpide, at tres bonne a boire. Pendant quelque temps, on a cru que cet eau provenait de la rosée qui s'y accumulait; mais comme leur ouverture est assez étroite et souvent fermée par l'opercule, on a reconnu que le liquide avait sa source dans une veritable *transpiration*, dont la surface interne de l'urne est le seige. C'est ordinairement pendant la nuit que l'urne se remplit, et dans cet état, l'opercule est généralement fermé. Pendant le jour, l'opercule se soulève, et l'eau diminue de moitié, soit qu'elle s'evapore, soit qu'elle soit résorbée."

solation and ruin, startled me at first, almost as much as if the ghosts of her own royal train had risen before me. While I was wandering about the deserted walls and chambers, from that very hall the sound of a viol reached my ear: "I heard music and dancing!" I inquired "what these things meant;" and was told by the old guide, that he occasionally gave liberty to the young people of Bakewell to come and dance here. He seemed vexed, however, to have them come, as if he personated the genius of the place (his family indeed had lived here three hundred years, he told me): but for my part, I could not at all sympathise with him; for I was glad to feel this strange mingling together of death and life, of the past and present, of ruins and revels, of hoary decay and ever-flourishing and happy youth, which reminds us at once of the ever-passing fashion of this world, and the ever-present beneficence of heaven. A full-length portrait of Queen Elizabeth, in gorgeous costume, looked down from the head of the hall upon the passing show of this world's pleasures—passing, but not more transient than the joys and splendours of her own life.

The view southward from Haddon Hall, the bold wooded bank on the left, the windings of the Wye, the lovely valley, the hills rising in the distance, make altogether one of the most romantic and beautiful scenes in the world.

But Matlock—sweet Matlock! dare I talk of beauty when approaching thee? It certainly is a spot of rare, if not unsurpassed loveliness. I shall not undertake to describe it—only in general as a sweet little valley, watered by the Derwent, surrounded by cliffs the most romantic, of every form and position. But it is to be remembered that cliffs and precipices in this country are very different things from what they are with us. The moisture of the climate causes ivy, laurel, and every shrub and tree, to grow up their sides and to spring out from their very summits. The cliffs here, too, are of every shape; some of them rising perpendicularly like battlements or towers, bare in some places, covered with ivy in others, and waving out from their tops green banners of luxuriant foliage; while between and through them you see the soft, deep, blue sky—softer, deeper, bluer, than it appears elsewhere; and would that it oftener had this aspect in this country of clouds, and rain, and smoke—for in this respect it is not to be compared with ours. I suppose this is the reason why Englishmen rave so much about the Italian sky. And I do not doubt, that when cultivation and good roads have gone up among the wild and craggy places of our own country, as many beauties will be unveiled as are found here. And even here, let it be remembered, for the comfort of you who stay at home, that all special beauty is but a small addition to the general beauty of nature. In another respect, you have the advantage. For sight seeing, travelling to see spectacles, is not favourable to that calmness of mind, so in unison with nature, and that leisure, that reverie mood of mind, which is necessary to "drink in the spectacle." This quotation from Wordsworth calls to mind what I heard a celebrated poet remark a few days ago, about some fine scenery he had lately been to visit. He was asked what he thought of it. He replied, that he hardly knew what to say, for he doubted whether he felt the scene; there was company; and there were ladies to be assisted; there was not time enough, and there was not silence and contemplation; and one of the

party wanted him to sit down in a certain place, in *order to feel* the effect.

Sometimes, too, the guides vex one sadly. At the Giant's Causeway, I thought, at first, that they would have torn us to pieces, literally stripped us naked like robbers, with their kind offers of assistance; and when we had selected one to get rid of the rest, he stood up in the boat, and with loud vociferation attempted to *direct our admiration*, first to one, and then to another of the wonders of nature; till I was obliged peremptorily to silence him, that we might have leisure and liberty to admire for ourselves.

I wish I could give you a sketch in pencil of the woman at the falls of Stoney Byers on the Clyde. As we jumped from the coach, I saw her there ready for a start, and knowing that we did'nt want her, I hastened down the path, quite upon the run at length; but she came in ahead at the critical point, when the falls burst in sight, and then stopping short, her costume, headgear, &c. scarcely obeying the command of the will to halt, she lifted up her hands, and outroared the cataract with exclamations, "Beautiful! beautiful!"

Guides are usually privileged persons, holding their situation from the proprietor of the grounds or the curiosities they exhibit. At the Matlock Cave, however, I found there was a double tax. I purchased a ticket down below for a sight of the cave, and that, I supposed, was the end of it. But when we came out, my guide, a very pretty young woman, who with a very naïve manner and accent had pointed out all the curious crystals and spars, fluor, dog teeth, lead, zinc, &c. said, with an equally naïve manner, "Please to remember the guide, sir."

By the bye, one of the peculiarities here is, that women do a thousand things that *men* do with us. They not only tend shop, but butcher's stalls, bar rooms, and offices of the stage coach in the capacity of agents; they are often guides to waterfalls and other spots which are visited; and nearly half of the people that I see in the streets of the villages and towns, are women.

Willersley Castle near Matlock is a fine building in simple but very good taste, consisting of a main building, and wings set off a little from it, and small towers at each corner of both the main building and the wings. It is situated on a bold bank, east of the Derwent. Behind it is a fine hill of cliffs and woods, laid out with beautiful walks; before, the Derwent, and over the river in front, a noble range of cliffs; beyond these, a swell of rich and cultivated country seen above them; and on the south, one of the finest prospects of valley and hill ever spread out to the eye.

Lichfield, *August* 8.—It is curious that the moment you leave Derbyshire you leave the picturesque country, the country of hills and valleys, for a level tract, far more rich, though far less beautiful—a tract, whose whole broad surface seems to be loaded with the wealth of agriculture. This is Staffordshire.

What legacies do men leave after them, that they little think of! There are certain spots, about which, in my wanderings through a strange land, I have felt as if they were a kind of home. Such is Lichfield, because Johnson was born here. So I felt about the lakes, from the residence of living, familiar authors.

The cathedral here is not so large as the York minster; it is not so

sublime: but the interior is, if possible, more beautiful. It has not, indeed, so much exquisite carving, and the stained glass is mostly modern, though very rich: but there is a keeping about the whole interior, a unity of design and similarity of finish, that are very grateful to the eye. The west front is very rich in sculpture, and the three spires very delicate and beautiful. I visited the house, and saw the room, in which Johnson was born; and went to the schoolhouse where Johnson, Addison, and Garrick were taught the rudiments: and where, if what Johnson says be as universally true as he makes it, "Latin was whipped" into Joseph, and Samuel, and David.

Birmingham, *August* 9.—Visited the pin manufactory, the button, the japanning—so have others, who can tell you about them better than I can. The royal Clarence vase, made by the Lockharts here, was on exhibition: the mammoth of all baubles; a most splendid thing. Weight, eight tons; fourteen feet high; twelve feet, the diameter of the basin; capacity, nine hundred gallons; cost, ten thousand pounds; when taken apart to be removed, consisting of six thousand eight hundred pieces; made of cut glass laid upon gold, inlaid with enamel; and appears like burnished gold, enriched with jewels. It was expected that the late king would purchase it, but he died before it was finished. You will ask, for what use? I answer, for none, but that to which my eyes put it, for sixpence!

They are erecting in Birmingham a very large building for a town-house, which promises to be one of the finest modern structures in the kingdom. One of the uses to which it is to be put, is that of furnishing accommodation for musical festivals. For this purpose an immense hall is reserved.

We have no such places in America for music; and it seems to me that our concerts are arranged and carried on, in some disregard of that circumstance. We have too much noise. Our orchestras are too powerful for our buildings. I will not say that they are too numerous; but it appears to me that the object of numbers in this case is overlooked. It is not to make a great noise—unless it be in occasional choruses, of a particular character. It is, I conceive, that every performer may give softness to his instrument or his voice, by diminishing its strength. In buildings of an ordinary size, such as our churches, strength is the quality least required. One voice—that of the preacher—fills the church, and that too while labouring under the impediments which distinct articulation and vocal utterance must throw in the way of loudness. Surely, then, one voice, in song, may fill a church. I do not deny that thirty singers *may* make better music than three; but, as matters stand in our country, I had rather take my chance with three. Responsibility is weakened by diffusion, and three persons pledged to this duty would give me a better guarantee for good music than thirty. At any rate, they could not put in danger the very organs of hearing. I know of few situations more painful or absurd, than to be seated at a concert, within ten feet of an orchestra of a hundred singers, and as many instruments, and to be obliged to stand the onset of one of their choruses. I cannot describe it; but I wish that Jack Downing would attend one of these concerts, and give an account of it. It is only to strip the occasion of the technical and conventional language in which it is usually described—wherein lies much of the humour of the Down-

ing family, by the bye—and it must appear to be one of the most ridiculous things in the world. What if one man had the strength of a hundred voices in him? Should we like to go to some one of our concert halls, and sit within ten feet of him, and listen to him three hours in succession? But why not?—if mere loudness is so expressive and pleasing, we might have a platoon of soldiers to fire blank cartridges before us all the evening. It would be a great noise, and give us a great idea—of something or other. And that, I fancy, is all the idea that most persons get from most of these deafening choruses. The aspect of an assembly stunned, drowned, dumbfounded, with this visitation—of the elements (of sound)—sufficiently shows, that they have found the pleasure they sought very trying to bear. But when the soft solo or duet pours in its sweet melody, how does every heart thrill, and every eye kindle and melt! It is a trembling snatch of pleasure, however, held in instant dread of the thundering wave that is coming. I am ignorant and have not inquired, but perhaps that is the very design of the chorus—to enhance the effect of real music!

Save that which is imported—when shall we have real music in America? It is scarcely too much to say, that nineteen-twentieths of all the instruction and expense bestowed upon the art among us, is thrown away. Not one young girl in fifty, I am afraid, who is taught music, is ever taught or led to pour her soul into her song; and what music can there be without that? If music is a cultivation of the fingers only, not of the soul—if it is not at once the instrument and offspring of intellectual and moral refinement, it is nothing worth. I may be told that many of the best performers have been low-minded and vicious persons. There may have been that unfortunate contrariety, too often seen, between their practice and their sentiments. But it will not do, I think, to say that the highest efforts of music may be reached without a high susceptibility of this nature.

Germany has laid the only sufficient basis for a national taste and talent in this art, by introducing its rudiments into the system of popular education. Would that some of those many idle and weary half hours now passed in our common schools, might be employed in singing the sweet old ballads of England, and holy Psalms. What a beautiful form of worship would it be for a school of little children!

Kenilworth Castle—a very majestic ruin; the whole not in such good preservation as Conway or Caernarvon; but particular parts, ranges, and windows, much more perfect. It is curious that Leicester's part, the latest built, is in the most ruinous condition. The lake is drained, and the towers of the gateway, by which Elizabeth entered, on the great occasion of her celebrated visit to the Earl of Leicester, are fallen. It was not the principal gate of entrance; but was chosen that she might pass by the lake and receive the homage of the fantastic water gods. This lake was on the west side—a small stream now flows through its bed—and with that to diversify the scenery, it must, in that quarter, have presented a noble landscape. The park was formerly twenty miles round, but is now pasture and ploughed fields.

The walls of the buildings left standing are very lofty; but the ivy creeps to the very top, surmounts the loftiest towers, and spreads its living screen and soft curtaining over the richly carved windows. The banqueting hall was eighty-four feet long by forty-eight broad, and its

windows twenty-seven feet high. Alas! the feast and the song are gone; the gathering of nobles and the flourish of trumpets are here no more; but instead of them, I heard a single buglehorn at a distance that came softly up among the crumbling walls and mouldering arches, as if to wail over their desolation; and here and there, in the court-yards, I saw picnic parties, carelessly seated on the grass, as if in mockery of the proud and guarded festivities and grandeurs of former days. I thought with myself, that they must be more familiar with the spot than I was, to be able to sit down, and "eat, drink, and be merry."

Warwick Castle, the seat of the Earl of Warwick, is, in its appearance from the inner court-yard, far the most majestic, magnificent castle I have seen—altogether more imposing and impressive. Its range of building, its noble towers, and one of them particularly, rising amid embowering cedars and banks of ivy—must be seen, to be felt or understood. The walks, and grounds, and woods beyond, are in keeping with all the rest; not looking as if everything was handled, and shaped, and trimmed, and shaven down, with elaborate art; but full of nature's beauty, with just enough of man's taste and management to open that beauty to the eye. The celebrated marble vase dug up from the villa of Adrian, is in the greenhouse amid the grounds.

The interior of the place corresponds very well with the character of the whole establishment; a very grand hall of entrance, paved with marble, and hung round with ancient armour of the Warwick family; the rooms all supplied with very rich and massive furniture, and especially with many tables, stands, &c. of every form and fashion, in the style of work called pietra dura, *i. e.* a kind of coarse mosaic work, or inlaying of variegated marbles. A great number of really fine portraits —several Vandykes, some Murillos; and one Raphael—portrait of a lady—very Madonna-like and beautiful; some lions of Rubens; and a Henry VIII. of Holbein.

At the Lodge we were shown Guy of Warwick's porridge-pot, about as large as a common potash kettle; and his hook, a sort of pitchfork, to fish up dinner from the caldron; also, his two-handed sword; his walkingstick, big enough for Polyphemus; the armour of his horse—breastplate, headpiece or helmet, &c. &c.

Stratford-on-Avon.—Shakspeare's house and tomb; and the site of the house (his own house) in which he died.

I have a strange feeling about Shakspeare, that I never heard anybody express. Though he is seated, by the admiration of mankind, upon an inaccessible height, yet there never was a being among the great men of the world, whom I have felt, if he were living, that I could so easily approach, and so familiarly converse with. He impresses me with awe, he fills me with a sort of astonishment, when I read him; yet he draws my love and confidence in such a way, that it seems to me I should not have feared him at all; but could have met him at the corner of the street, or have sat down with him on the first convenient rail of a fence, and talked with him as freely as with my father. What is this? Is it that the truly loftiest genius is imbued and identified, more than any other, with the spirit of our common humanity? Is it that the noblest intellect is ever the most simple, unsophisticated, unpretending, and kindly? Or, is it that Shakspeare's works were a household treasure—his name a household word—from

my childhood? It may be, that all of these reasons have had their influence. And yet if I were to state what seems to me to be the chief reasons, I should put down these two words — unconsciousness — of which Thomas Carlyle has so nobly written, as one of the traits of genius — *unconsciousness* and *humanity*. He was unconscious of his greatness, and therefore would not have demanded reverence. He was an absolute impersonation of the whole spirit of humanity, and therefore he is, as it were, but a part of one's-self.

If anything were wanted to contrast with the nobleness of Shakspeare, it might be found in a horrible act of meanness perpetrated here, which must draw from every visiter to this place, scarcely less than his execration. Shakspeare's house fell, after his death, into the hands of a clergyman—whose name—but let his name perish! This man, being annoyed by the frequent visits of strangers to a mulberry tree before the house, first caused that to be cut down; and then, vexed by the levy of a poor rate upon the house, he angrily declared that it should never pay taxes again, and razed it to the ground!

CHAPTER VI.

BLENHEIM — OXFORD, ITS COLLEGES AND CHAPELS — NATIONAL HEALTH — ILL HEALTH OF OUR PEOPLE IN AMERICA — CAUSES — REMEDIES.

Blenheim Castle and Park in Woodstock—the present of the nation to Marlborough after the battle of Blenheim. The structure is immense, built on three sides of a square; the principal range of building one hundred and eighty feet long, and the side ranges nearly as much. The park is not larger than some others, nor so large; but it appears more extensive, from the openings through the trees — not vistas—but openings through groves and clumps of trees, in various directions, and extending, apparently, almost as far as the eye can reach.

On the borders of an artificial lake, and upon a fine swell of land, stood the old royal residence, celebrated in Scott's novel, "Woodstock." Nothing now remains to mark the spot, but two large sycamores, planted when the castle was demolished, and Rosamond's well. There are some remarkable oaks with immense trunks (one twenty-seven feet in circumference), said to be as old as Henry the Seventh, standing in a distant part of the park. By the bye, the principal trees in all the parks of England, and all over the country, indeed, are the oak and the beech. There are some cedars of Lebanon, yews, &c.; but few elms, and none that I have seen to compare with ours on the Housatonic and Connecticut.

The chief attraction of this palace is found in its paintings. It is the first fine collection that I have seen. There is a suite of rooms, four or five hundred feet long, filled with pictures—many of them by the first masters, Vandyke, Rubens, Carlo Dolci, Titian, Teniers, Rembrandt, Guido, &c. Nothing, I think, struck me so much as a Madonna, by Carlo Dolci. There is also a very striking full-length portrait by Kneller, of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough—a very beautiful

face, but looking as if it might easily furnish expression to all the fiery passions ascribed to her.

The library surpasses every room that I have seen, for magnificence; the walls, the alcoves, the doorways, all of marble—the room probably two hundred feet long, and thirty feet high—seventeen thousand volumes. The library looks upon the private gardens.

The chapel contains a magnificent marble monument of the first Duke and Duchess of Marlborough.

On the road to Oxford, I saw for the first time, in travelling more than a thousand miles, wooden fences; in this country they are always stone, or turf, or hedges. Neither have I seen a shingle in the kingdom; but always slate, tiles, stone, or thatch. Multitudes of women are to be seen everywhere, gleaning the harvest fields—sometimes fifty, seventy, in a field. They pick up what remains after the reaper, straw by straw, till they get a large bundle, and then carry it home on their heads. The harvests consist of wheat, barley, and oats. No Indian corn is grown here.

Oxford, *August* 14.—A city of spires, pinnacles, and Gothic towers, rising amid groves of trees. The twenty colleges, *i. e.* ranges and quadrangles of ancient buildings, mostly in the Gothic style, are amazingly impressive. Several of them have beautiful gardens and walks, and some of them are quite extensive.

It is in vain to begin with Oxford; a week would not suffice for a description; and no description could tell what a walk is among these glorious old quadrangles. Yet I cannot pass, without paying a tribute to the unequalled chapels of Oxford. In that of New College, there is an altar-piece, by Westmacott, well worth perusing—representing, in successive pieces, the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Descent from the Cross, the Resurrection, and the Ascension. The varying expression in the countenance of the Virgin is very striking and affecting. But the chapel of Magdalen College, the interior but just finished, is, in the substantial parts, the crowning beauty of all the chapels: the entire walls of polished stone—the screen of stone, most exquisitely carved; the whole wall over the altar, with three ranges of niches and canopies, and surmounted by a *noli me tangere*, all carved in the same manner.

There is a *noli me tangere*—"touch me not"—by Mengs, in the All Souls' College chapel, about which I lingered for some time. The considerate, fixed, compassionate look of Jesus—superiority painted in the face, yet shaded by a human tenderness—and, in Mary's countenance, as she kneels and stretches out her hand, something of surprise, great eagerness repressed by deep awe—the delicate suffusion of the eye—a suffusion, not with tears, but as if the blood were starting through every fine and invisible pore, in and about the eye—it was something to gaze upon, and turn back to, for a last look.

I do not know that I shall find a more fit place than under the shadow of these college walls, to say some things that I wish to say on the subject of national health—for it especially concerns our students.

This subject drew my attention on landing in England, and has impressed me at every step. We have nothing among us like the aspect of health that prevails here—the solid, substantial, rotund, rubicund appearance of all classes. We are, in comparison, a thin, delicate, pale-

faced people. We are, I am sometimes tempted to say, a nation of invalids in the comparison. The contrast is great and striking between the labouring classes of the two countries; but it is yet greater and more remarkable between the women, merchants, and men of study. I could scarcely have believed in the difference if I had not seen it. Besides, all health is relative, and "very well" in England must mean something, I think, considerably different from "very well" in America; not to say, also, that the "very well" of common parlance is frequently found, on more minute and friendly inquiry, to be quite distant from the truth.

Much, though not by any means all of this difference, is doubtless owing to our climate. When I was coming abroad I was desired by an eminent physician to inquire what it is, in the habits or circumstances of foreign students, that enables them to accomplish so much more study than we do, and at the same time to live longer and in the enjoyment of better health. I *have* inquired; and I certainly can find nothing in their habits that should give them such advantages over us. They are not more temperate and abstemious than we are; I should think the reverse is the fact. They seem to have no occasion for paying such regard to matters of regimen and diet as we do. They certainly talk less about them, and think less about them, than we do. There are no hardier or healthier students in the world than those of Germany; and it is well-known that they are not remarkably cautious about their modes of living. But then, in Europe, they do not experience the extremes of temperature, and especially the sudden changes, that we do in America. For myself, I have observed, that that temperature, whether hot or cold, which continues longest of an equable character, is most favourable to exertion. It is our autumn, and especially our spring, with its frequent and sudden alternations of sometimes twenty and thirty degrees in a day, that seems to tear the constitution to pieces. I lately met with an observation of the celebrated Blumenbach, to the same purpose. He was asked what was the cause of the extraordinary health of the German students: and he answered that it was the equable climate which they either had, or, by means of the Russian stove *made* for themselves, the year round.

There are, indeed, other differences. All thinking in our country is brought into immediate connexion with the actual interests of society, and is therefore apt to be more exciting, anxious and exhausting. The mind of the country runs to politics, controversies, reforms. We have but few students among us, who are quietly engaged in the pursuits of abstract science, without a thought beyond them. We have none perhaps like Blumenbach himself, spending life in pleasing studies of insects, in calm and retired contemplations of holy and beautiful nature; else we possibly might have some like him, who could study sixteen hours a day, and find a green old age at eighty.

There are yet other differences which affect a wider circle of society among us. We are an anxious people. The paths of competition in our country are wide and free. Hence no man among us is satisfied with his condition. Every man is striving to rise. Every man is ambitious; and many are discontented and sad. These things weigh upon the heart, and wear upon the springs of life. I do not say that this is a bad condition; I think it favourable to improvement; but I say

that it is trying both to health and virtue. At the same time we have fewer sports and holidays than any other people; and what we have are falling into disrepute. The national mind wants buoyancy; and buoyancy of spirit is one of the most essential springs of health.

I am inclined, also, to impute something to our modes of living. The Bonapartean style of dining doubtless prevails among our busy citizens, more than the physician would advise. The silent and awful celerity with which our meals are dispatched, is not altogether a steamboat or stage-house horror. But this rapidity of eating does not arise, I imagine, from any peculiar voracity of the American *genus*. We are a very busy people; and as such, I think, we arrange our times of eating very unadvisedly. Dinner in our cities at present is unfortunately in a state of transition, from the old customs of the New World to the new customs of the Old World. It has now arrived at the hour of three or four o'clock. It will be far better for health, when it has fairly reached the destined goal of six or seven; when the merchant or the student shall come to his dinner as the grand family *reunion* of the day —"all studies solemnly defied," all cares locked up in the counting-room—when he shall actually *eat less* because he has *more time* (the physician can explain that)—when there may be some chance of enlivening and elevating that humble but necessary occupation, with sprightly or grave discourse—and when it may be followed, not with a hasty walk to the warehouse, or an anxious retreat to the study, but with those domestic or social engagements and recreations which will promote digestion, cheerfulness, refinement, virtue, and happiness altogether.

I must add a word upon our modes of dress. With a climate twice as trying as that of England, we are, on this point, twice as negligent. Whether there is actual violence done to the form in the absurd attempt to make it genteel, I will not undertake to decide; but certainly the bust of an English woman shows that it never was, and never could have been subjected to those awful processes of girting, which must have been applied in many cases to produce what we see among us. At any rate, the fearful prevalence of consumption in our country, is an admonition of our duty on this subject of dress, that ought not to be disregarded. And especially in a country where no limits are set to fashionable imitation—where a man is very liable to mistake upon the door-step his domestic for his wife or daughter—this is a subject that comes home to every family, whether low or high, and comes too in the most palpable forms of interest—in the suffering and expense of sickness, and in the bitterness of bereavement.

But consumption and death are not the only alarming forms in which the subject of female health presents itself. Let any one look at the women of America, and, with all their far-famed delicacy and beauty, let him tell me what he thinks of them, as the mothers of future generations? What are the prospects of the national constitution and health, as they are to be read in the thousands of pale faces and slender forms, unfit for the duties of maternity, which we see around us? Let any one go with this question to their nurseries, and he will see the beginning of things to come. Let him go to the schools, and he will turn over another leaf in the book of prophecy. Oh! for a sight at home, of the beautiful groups of children that are constantly seen in England, with their rosy cheeks and robust frames!

I may seem to be speaking in terms more earnest and admonitory than there is occasion for; but I am persuaded that the public mind among us is by no means possessed with the full importance of this subject, nor with the extent of the evil referred to. I ask any man to cast about his thoughts upon the circle of his female acquaintances, and by some inquiry of their physician or of their particular friends to assist him if necessary, to ascertain what is the real state of their health. The result, I have no doubt, he will find to be, that three out of four, perhaps six out of seven, are, most of the year, unwell—ailing, complaining, feeble, suffering. Certainly more than half of the female population of our country are suffering, either with dyspepsy, or with nervous disorders, or with symptoms of consumption, or with some unaccountable failure of strength, or with some of the many other forms of disease incident to retired and sedentary habits. If any one thinks this statement extravagant, I will only again desire him to make out the list of his acquaintances, and see how it stands. Neither do I say, on the other hand, that everybody is well, in any country. But I do consider the case of our own, in this respect, to be very peculiar.*

If it be so, certainly it would not be easy with any words to overrate the importance of the subject. Why, it would not be difficult to swell it to the importance of the "temperance cause" itself—let it only have for a while the same exclusive and concentrated view fixed upon it. It is not posterity alone that comes into the account; it is not present misery alone; it is vice also. How many have been driven to that very intemperance of which so much is said, and so justly—how many have been repelled from their home, and carried to places of evil resort, by ill health, by low spirits, by a sad and complaining face there, that bereft home of all its charms!

Can nothing be done? If I had thought so, I would have said nothing. But I believe that much can be done, if attention can be aroused to the subject.

We have, doubtless, an unpropitious climate. It is unfavourable to the necessary out-of-door exercise. We have no such habits in this respect as the English—nothing approaching to them; and the difference is doubtless owing to our climate. In the summer it is too hot for exercise; in the winter it is too cold; in the spring it is too variable. The autumn, indeed, is favourable; but that is too short a season to form habits which shall bear up against the adverse influences of the whole year.

What, then, is to be done? I answer, that an effort must be made proportioned to the difficulties that are to be overcome. Exercise, out of doors, *can* be taken in our climate the year round; as there are some good examples to prove. I am told, indeed, that some improvement is already taking place in the habits of our American ladies in this respect.

* I heard the other day the following fireside conversation :—

Doctor, will you please to look at that girl's tongue.

Doctor. It is very much coated.

Mother. It almost always is, more or less.

Doctor. Oh! I never saw the tongue of an American woman that was not.

All. Why, what do you mean?

Doctor. I mean what I say; that I scarcely ever saw the tongue of an American female that did not show that mark of ill health.

And many things besides this can be done. Clothing can be better adapted to the purposes of exercise in, and defence against our climate. We want more of the foreign liberty of walking out, without being in full dress. I am sorry to observe the prejudice of fashion against the India rubber shoe—actual instrument for advancing civilization, as I consider it—promoter of society—which stands instead of carriages, and horses, and servants, if it were but duly appreciated and used. To go back a step: our children should be brought up on plain fare in the nursery; they should be constantly inured to the climate as they grow up; at a later period they should not be made victims to the hard studies of fashionable schools; and when they are sent into the world, they should not be sacrificed to the follies of fashionable dress and dissipation.

If there is any conscience in the country, these things must, at length, come to be regarded. The claims of the present, and of future generations; the most essential welfare of the nation, and the dearest happiness of beings unborn; the anxieties and sorrows of husbands, fathers, and friends, call upon the women of our country to regard the care of their health as an *absolute duty!*

CHAPTER VII.

SLOUGH—STOKE PARK—THE CHURCHYARD OF GRAY'S ELEGY—WINDSOR CASTLE—CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT IN ENGLAND—CLAIMS OF THE DISSENTERS—THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLE—EFFECT OF AN ESTABLISHMENT UPON THE STATE OF RELIGION—RAMMOHUN ROY—EFFECT OF AN ESTABLISHMENT UPON THE CHARACTER OF THE CLERGY—POSITION OF THE CLERGY IN AMERICA—DANGER OF SUBSERVIENCY TO POPULAR OPINION—GENERAL LIABILITY OF THE SAME CHARACTER.

August 14.—I came down to Slough to-day, and stopped for the night, that I might to-morrow visit Windsor Castle, two miles distant. In the direction opposite to the castle, and about the same distance, is Stoke Park, within the bounds of which is the church (the Stoke parish-church) and the churchyard, upon which Gray is said to have composed his celebrated Elegy; and near at hand is his monument. After I had taken my tea, I determined to walk to the spot.

It was some time after sunset when I arrived there; a glow in the western sky spread a solemn hue over all objects, but scarcely penetrated the deep shadow of the groves. I could not have chosen an hour more fit for such a visit; nor could any place be more fit for such meditations as those of Gray's Elegy. The church is one of those singular structures so common in England, which seems to consist of several buildings clustered together without any order or plan. It has a pretty spire, which rises, with picturesque effect, amid the trees that surround the place on all sides, except that of the approach. The churchyard is full of the swelling mounds, mentioned in the Elegy, and there, too, stands the "venerable yew." The monument appears in the distance, through the opening by which you approach. It is a simple, square block, with a sort of oblong urn on the top. One of the four sides bears

the name, age, &c. and mentions that the poet's remains sleep in the neighbouring churchyard, in the same tomb with his mother's, and bearing no other than the affectionate inscription by which he commemorated *her* virtues. It was so dark when I arrived at the churchyard, that I could only read the words "careful and tender mother"—yet what a wealth of affection, what a world of solicitude and love, what a life of cares never to be repaid nor described, do those few words set forth!

It was among the last shadows of the late evening twilight that I commenced my walk homeward—if, alas! a traveller's home can be called home at all. As I left the park, one of those contrasts presented itself which "the lights and shadows" of life are so constantly depicting upon the many-coloured web of our reflections. Windsor Castle, seen in the distance, was just then lighted up for the evening. "What care we," I said, "who built its mighty towers, compared with the interest we feel in him, who built the simple rhyme of the Elegy on this country churchyard! I had rather take my chance for fame in these few lines, which genius in its holy hour of inspiration has written, than in all that the royal masters of Windsor Castle have done, during the varied and anxious lives which have fretted themselves away, till the exclamation has arisen, as it did from the dying bed of George the Fourth, 'Oh God! this is death!'"

I should have mentioned that three sides of Gray's monument bear appropriate inscriptions from his own verses; two of them were from the Elegy, the other I cannot refer to.

On one side were the following stanzas:—

> "Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
> Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
> Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
> The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.
>
> The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
> The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
> The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
> No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed."

Another side bore these:—

> "One morn I miss'd him from th' accustom'd hill,
> Along the heath, and near his favourite tree:
> Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
> Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he.
>
> The next, with dirges due, in sad array,
> Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne—
> Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
> Graved on the stone beneath you aged thorn."

His monument, looking towards the churchyard, still seemed to be uttering the language of his living thoughts. It was long, I assure you, as I turned back from this spot, before I dropped the folded arms, and fell into the common-place gait of this worldly journey.

Windsor Castle, *August* 15.—I found the state-rooms shut up, in preparation for fêtes about to be given on occasion of the king's birthday, next week. I could therefore only walk around the Castle, and go into St. George's Chapel; which I did during the daily morning service. I asked an attendant (a sort of sexton or keeper, several of

whom are always connected with, and usually found about, all the cathedrals) whether the king was present at this daily worship; and was answered that he attended only on Sunday. The royal family pew is in a sort of screened gallery. The chapel is a beautiful specimen of showy Gothic, consisting of a nave and choir. The banners of the Knights of the Garter are hung in the choir; the carved canopies in oak are very rich, and as old as Henry the Sixth.

Nothing seems to me more sad than these daily cathedral or chapel services, as I have usually seen them; a few official persons with the singers make half of the attendance; the music, the singing, always very admirable, the result of constant practice—the glorious structure, the carved work, the appurtenances, so to speak, of the service—all beautiful, all rich, all fitted to touch the imagination and move the heart: but here is the sadness—it seems all to be gone through as a form; the singing men and boys perform their part like automatons; the reading and chanting of the service (and the reading is a sort of chanting) seems not to be aided by one particle of unction. In a high state of devotional excitement, I can very well conceive of it as natural to sing out one's thoughts; but this sort of utterance without the excitement appears something dismal and distressing.

Windsor Castle has an aspect of firmness and durability beyond any I have seen in England. The stone of which it is built is apparently harder—for all the building stone in England is very soft. It is this, I think, that accounts for the vast amount of Gothic work—the thousands of chiselled pillars and pinnacles—which never would have been done in granite. If the buildings of England *were* in granite or marble, it would be far more rich in architectural treasures. Now they are, wherever exposed to the weather, fast mouldering away.

Windsor Castle is surrounded on every side by gravelled walks and terraces, from which there are fine views. It looked to me like a joyless place of abode—no retirements—no bowers—no shaded walks, immediately adjoining it: a little garden is on the side of the private apartments, but its shrubbery is not high enough to furnish any screen or drapery to the fifteen or twenty statues placed in it.

London, *August* 16.—London I must leave till a future day, as I set off in a week for the Continent.

In the mean time, I shall indulge here in some of the many reflections which six weeks in England have forced upon me. One of the subjects which not only the existing state of things, but which continual conversation, at the present moment, urges upon the attention of the American traveller, is the different method adopted in England and America, for the public support of religion.

In England, Christianity is established and supported by law, and it is established in a particular form. With us it is sustained by the voluntary contribution of individuals, and no preference is given to any sect.

The question between these two modes of proceeding is likely to become in England one of the most agitating interest, and of the most profound importance. In proportion as the people are better informed —in proportion as they read and think more, they are likely to differ from one another more widely, at least on minor points of doctrine and ritual. And with every step of this progress, the demand for religious

freedom must grow stronger. And with the growth of this demand, and of juster ideas of religion, it will be more and more felt, that the voluntary and the impartial plan of supporting religious institutions, is, in principle, the most reasonable, the most tolerant, and the most congenial with the spirit of Christianity. So that the only question will be, whether religion can be supported in this manner.

This particular question is becoming, at the present moment, one of great interest in England. The Dissenters are demanding to be relieved from their burdens. Petitions to Parliament, either for an entire abolition of the union between church and state, or for an essential modification of that union, have, it is well known, become matters of almost every-day occurrence. There is a determination on this point, which must at length succeed; and I must say, indeed, from my own impressions about the hardship of the case, that if the Dissenters— if those whose consciences, and property, and personal respectability, are alike invaded by the church establishment, will not cause their voice and the voice of justice to be heard, they deserve to be oppressed! It is in vain to talk about the revenues of the church as a bequest from former times, sacred from all profane hands. It is true; but it is nothing to the purpose. It is true; but whose *are* the profane hands? If the church endowments were a bequest for the benefit of any particular class of Christians, it was for the Catholics. The largest portion of them were actually Catholic endowments. If it is proper that they should be diverted from that original design at all, it ought at least to be done in aid and furtherance of the whole religion of the country. Is one half of the people to be visited with the forfeiture of these advantages, for their honest dissent? Suppose that the attendants on the episcopal churches should dwindle away to a tenth part of the population. Suppose that its adherents should number but a thousand persons in the kingdom. Would it be right that these persons should monopolize all the immense revenues of the church? Would the country endure such a body of ecclesiastical princes, presiding over deserted cathedrals? or would it endure the argument that should undertake to sustain them in such a position?

I would not advocate the abolition of tithes, but their distribution among all the religious sects of the country, in the proportion of their numbers. This, of course, would leave much to be done by the voluntary principle; and cannot that principle be trusted to do much, in a country where half of the population are nobly supporting their own pastors, and paying tithes to pastors of another flock? And what now is the reward of this noble behaviour? I am a stranger in the country, and may err; but it appears to me that there is a good deal of church scorn here. No man, I think, can travel through this country without knowing that the Dissenters are frequently treated in a manner amounting to absolute indignity? As to the *injustice* of the system, it is well known. The Dissenter is excluded from the universities. In fact, he can neither be born, nor baptized, nor married, nor buried, but under the opprobrium of the law.*

And now, what is alleged in defence of this state of things? no prin-

* That is to say, there can be no legal registration of his birth; his baptismal certificate does not entitle him to legal marriage; and he can receive neither marriage nor burial from the hands of his own pastor.

ciple or pretence of justice that ever I have heard, but only the principle of expediency. It is said, that monopoly and exclusion here are necessary. It is said, that religion cannot be supported in dignity and honour, without ample endowments and rich benefices. It is said, that no reliance whatever can be placed upon the voluntary principle. It is constantly alleged, that America has failed in the attempt to sustain religion upon that basis.

This question will make our religious statistics—an account, that is to say, of the number of our churches, and the number of their attendants, and of the salaries of their pastors—a matter of very great importance. When this account is made out, I have no doubt that it will redound to the triumph of the voluntary principle. I have no doubt it will appear, that, in proportion to the population, more people attend church in America, and larger funds are raised for the support of public worship and instruction, than in any other country. I have no doubt it will appear that religion may be left for its support to the feelings which it inspires in the world; that it needs, no more than science or literature, the patronage of governments; that it may, in fine, be safely confided to the care of Heaven, and to the piety of its children.

But it is not enough to say, that religion does not want the state; it is injured by the state. It always suffers from its union with the state. State patronage tends to give religion a mercenary and a mechanical character. Religion is liable to lose something of its vital character, when it is made to depend on a compulsory support. And it ceases, moreover, to be a common interest, when its affairs are managed, when its institutions are regulated, and its officers are appointed, by a few.

Government has no business to intermeddle with religion. It may extend a general countenance and fostering care to it, as it may to learning and the arts. But it might as well, as fitly, undertake to prescribe what men shall think about matters of science, or what shall be the laws of criticism and taste, as to prescribe religious creeds and the methods of enforcing them. The proper business of government is to take charge of the political and civil interests of a kingdom. The moment they enter into the interior departments of the mind—those interior regions of thought and feeling, where the mind for itself, and in perfect freedom, must work out its own welfare—they show that they are entirely out of their sphere, by their complete inefficiency to do good, and their powerful efficiency to do evil.

Is not this one reason, in fact, why Christianity has failed to set up that empire in the minds of men, which it was evidently designed and destined to obtain? Is it not, in part, because its pure, simple, solemn authority has been enfeebled by the intervention of political patronage and influence? Has it not been ambitious to make itself strong, not in men's consciences, but in establishments, and enactments, and creeds, and forms? Has it not thus been made a worldly interest, rather than a spiritual conviction? a due observance of rites, rather than a strict practice of virtues? a creed rather than a faith, and an institution rather than an action—the great action of life? Has not the effect of state interposition been, in fact, to sever religion from the heart—since it has taken religion into its own keeping, and will not trust it to the care, or free examination, of individual minds; since it has

mystified and disguised the simple matter of keeping the heart, which is the whole matter of Christianity, with tests and prescriptions, and with state machinery of all sorts; so that inward virtue has been accounted nothing, by the temporal power, in comparison with outward compliance; so that the former, if it chance to be coupled with dissent, has been marked out for injury and disgrace, while the latter, however unprincipled, has been the passport to the highest honours, privileges, and trusts!

However this may be, there certainly is an amazing insensibility in the world to the spiritual character of Christianity, which seems to require some special reasons to account for it. And I must venture to say, that, bad as the case is with us in America, it seems to me considerably worse in this country. Whoever shall visit this, the most religious nation in Europe, will find an acknowledged neglect of religion and laxity of morals among the higher classes, an acknowledged ignorance of religion, and inattention to its rites among the lower classes; yes, and an acknowledged coldness and mercenary spirit among many of the established clergy of this country, that will fill his mind with painful emotions, if not with painful questions.*

* I can never forget the effect of this spectacle, as I observed it upon the mind of that celebrated Indian philosopher and Christian, who, instead of being permitted to fulfil the hopes of multitudes in a life of eminent usefulness, was destined to fall in the midst of his philanthropic labours, and to leave his remains to sleep far from his kindred, in the bosom of a strange land. There was something—I may say here, since it is not altogether foreign to my purpose in introducing him—there was something touching in the very appearance, and certainly in the fate of this distinguished stranger, when viewed in contrast with the climate and country which he came to visit, and in which, as it proved, he came to die. A child of the soft Indian clime, with all the guileless simplicity and tenderness of a child; with a mind and frame flexible and swayed to each gentler impulse, as if it were to the soft, luxurious, Asiatic breeze of his own native valleys; with an all-embracing philanthropy, of which his oriental manners, all freedom and tenderness, were the fit expression—he appeared to me, amid the cold regions and cold manners alike of the North, as a being dragged from some more genial sphere; and there was something touching, almost as if it were cruel, in the fate, by which such a being was destined to sink beneath a clime, and to mingle his dust with a country, that were not his, nor, in any respect, like his own.

I must not, however, here linger upon the person and manners of this great and good man, but hasten to observe, that one of the most interesting private purposes with which Rammohun Roy came to Europe, was to witness a practical illustration of Christianity. He had revolved the truths of this pure and sublime system in his mind at home—the beautiful theory, the perfect model was in his thoughts, and it was not yet brought down to be reconciled, and partly identified with an unworthy practice, unworthily called Christian—and what now, will it be supposed, were Rammohun Roy's impressions, on surveying the religion of Christendom? I may further premise, that his interest in Christianity seemed as earnest and as vital as any I ever witnessed. It was evidently far more than a speculative faith with him. It seemed to be the absorbing feeling of his whole mind and heart. With such views and feelings, then, his impressions on witnessing the illustration which Christians are actually giving of their religion, were those of the deepest disappointment and the most profound sadness. There was nothing in him of that peevish or angry complaint, still less of that haughty reproach, which is so often found to accompany a depreciatory estimate of the virtues of Christians; but it was a pure, philanthropic, generous, Christian sadness. It was the sadness of sympathy, and disappointment, and wonder. He spoke of the spiritual lives that Christians ought to lead, and of the sacred and dear ties between them, and of the office

Must I confess that this deficiency seems especially to attach to the clerical function? Yet such is my conviction. The pulpit is not—no, it is not in any country, answering the call which the human heart has a right to make upon it, and which the awakened mind of the world is now making with double earnestness. The priesthood is an institution of no practical efficiency commensurate with its power. Though it can scarcely be said of the clergy of America, I think—though it ought not to be alleged against the *working* clergy of England—yet of the whole body of the priesthood in the world, it must be confessed that it does not work enough; it does not show enough industry, intellectual or active; it does not, in any way, accomplish enough. Still less does it work with the requisite energy and unction. The heart, the soul of the priesthood is not aroused, as it ought to be, to its great vocation.

And why is it thus? Why is the priest this dull, formal being—a cold preacher, a mere performer of rites—a negligent worker in the labours of his great calling? Why, unless it be, partly at least, because he is under the sheltering patronage of government; because he belongs to an establishment and a privileged order; because he is independent, to a certain extent, of public opinion? And if the teachers are negligent and indifferent, if they act upon the mercenary rule of getting as much emolument, and doing as little duty as they can, what can be expected of the disciples? I do not say that the people are not to blame. It is not my business, at present, to settle points of this nature. But I do say, that something, and something, too, besides the general depravity of human nature, must have intervened to corrupt the springs of the Christian faith, to taint the salutary virtues of the waters of life, at their very fountain-head. Something, I repeat, has intervened—some heavy weight has been laid on the energies of Christian principle—and I believe that is, in part, the weight of huge and irresponsible establishments.

I do hope, therefore—not presumptuously nor proudly, I am sure—but I do humbly hope, that we are to see a better illustration of Christianity in America. There are moral reforms, there is a religious progress going on among us, unparalleled in the annals of the world, and I hope that these are omens of future improvement. I do not say that our religious condition is at all satisfactory, and I fear it is but too certain it would not have proved so to that eastern confessor, who entertained it as one of the strongest wishes of his heart, to come among us. But still I trust that, since the Word has free course among us, it is yet to be glorified.

But that such a result may be secured, we must take heed, that we use not our religious liberty for evil occasions or purposes. If in other countries, the religious principle is too much bound up in institutions and forms, and religion itself is too much a matter of mere propriety, let us take heed that the same principle does not, among us, spread into extravagant error and wild fanaticism; and that our religion be not,

of the clergy, and of their parochial relations, as if he perfectly understood all these things—as if the holy book and his own heart had perfectly taught him; and he lamented, with the most touching fervour and tenderness, the want of these things in England. I would the whole world of Christians could have heard this affectionate disciple from the banks of the Ganges, and have taken the lesson and the law from his lips.

half of it, controversy, sectarianism, and dissension. And if the clergy of established churches are too liable to be proud priests, or mere dignified officials, if they are too independent of public opinion, let us take heed lest *ours* be enslaved to public opinion; lest they contract the feelings and manners that befit such an ignominious bondage; lest they become, in other words, pusillanimous, crafty, managing, sycophantic, and vulgar. I am willing that this body of men should feel the legitimate and wholesome effect of public opinion; I wish it. But let them not be restrained from their just liberty, whether of speech, manners, or modes of life. Let them not be brought into the dangerous position, which will expose them to act a double part—into that trying dilemma where conscientious conviction points one way, and public coercion another.

It is a degrading position: not, perhaps, to the individual mind, which may indeed do itself honour, by foregoing its rights for the advantage of others; but it is a position which is likely to degrade the profession, by preventing many high-minded young men from entering into it, that might do it honour. And it is likely to do further injury —injury, indeed, to religion itself—by giving an ascetic, puritanic, stern, and sanctimonious character to an order of men, which is required to be an example of the Christian virtues. And, as on the one hand, public opinion should not lay undue, unlawful, degrading restraint on the clergy; so neither, on the other hand, should it urge them further in the discharge of their professional duties, than their own judgment, conscience, zeal, and physical ability will carry them. Let not a man in this office be unreasonably urged to do this or that thing, to preach many sermons, to hold many meetings, to make many visits, or to adopt new and doubtful measures, by being told, that this or that man, in a neighbouring town, or belonging to a rival sect, is doing thus, and so.

But I must go beyond the clergy in the application of this remark. In fact, there is nothing which I so much dread from the operation of our political and religious institutions, as the subserviency of the best minds in the country to the worst minds in it; the subserviency of men of talents, education, and refinement, to mere numbers. The mind of a country ought to rule it—ought, I mean, to have the ascendency, not in politics only, but in every species of influence; but that mind does not, and never did, and never will, reside in the mass. There are at any moment, in any nation—there are in our own, a hundred minds that are possessed of more knowledge, of more profound wisdom, than all the other minds in it. Suppose, now, that neither you nor I, reader! have any claim to class ourselves with the elect hundred, and that we take our place with the mass. What now are we to say, in such a situation? Must we say, that because there are a hundred men above us, and above all their countrymen, the entire interests of the country ought to be committed to this council of a hundred? Not at all. And why not at all? Because we cannot implicitly trust such a council; since although it may have more intelligence than all of us, it may not have virtue equal to its intelligence. Hence arises the necessity of popular intervention, of popular suffrage, as a safeguard from oppression. Could we confide in the few, probably despotic institutions would be the best. That is to say, the government of one or a few, possessed of great experience, influenced by uniform principles, and having the con-

fidence and long-continued attachment of the people, would be, simply considered, better than our constant rotation in office, our varying counsels, violent conflicts, and party legislation. All those advantages, however, do we give up; all these evils do we incur, for the sake of security against oppression. This is the object—this security—of all the circuitous and clumsy contrivances of a representative government. This is the object of general suffrage. It is security. It is *not* that universal suffrage best represents or expresses the *mind* that is in a country. It is not that the many are more sagacious than the few. Nothing can be farther from the truth. The people know nothing valuable about many things of which they pretend to judge, and of which their party prejudices make them judge and speak so confidently. Their ignorance, in fact, is opposed as a sort of foil to the weapons of sagacity. If the people could see clearly, as the few champions do that hold these weapons, and if they could, in consequence, be marshalled into parties, according to that clear perception of selfish objects and party interests, it would be far more dangerous than for masses of them blindly to dash against each other, as they do now—breaking their own force, and breaking in, with blundering interference, upon the ambitious plans of their leaders. I repeat it—the popular mass, instead of possessing all the sagacity in the country, throws itself upon the very edge of a sagacity that it does not perceive: and the effect, I admit, is to clog and blunt the sword that might otherwise pierce the very bosom of the republic; but another effect, no less certain, is, that the popular mass comes away wounded and bleeding from the contest. Does this assertion need any far-fetched proof? Do the people of our country need to have it proved to them, that they often are suffering from thrusts and blows given to them, in the sharp and reckless contests of the few?

It may be thought that these facts and suggestions are at war with my leading observation—*viz.* that nothing is more to be dreaded, than the subjection of the best minds in the country to the worst—of the few to the many. But let it be observed, that this is a question about degrees. To a certain extent it is desirable that the many should have a control over the few. It is desirable that the many should influence the few, but it is not desirable that it should enslave them. Subserviency I protest against, not deference to the people. The latter is just and reasonable, and safe for both parties. The former, the subjection of a superior mind to popular control, only makes its sagacity more dangerous. It is still none the less selfish for the subjection, and none the less has its selfish aims; and the people, by enslaving, have not weakened, but only degraded it. And from the action of such a mind, the people must expect eventually to suffer more than from one held in less, but lawful restraint.

It was not, however, to political relations that I intended to apply the observation I have made on the danger of such a subserviency. The same thing exists, and is, perhaps, no less to be regretted, in the religious world. It is a fact, which can have escaped none but the dullest observer, that throughout our whole country, and in every particular sect, the most cultivated and intelligent minds are generally the most liberal minds. They are the most liberal with regard to the comparative unimportance of the differences of religious opinion—the most liberal in the extension of their charity to differing sects—the most liberal,

without being guilty of undue license, in their reading, their conversation, their habits, and manners; the most liberal in the construction they put upon what are to be considered as lawful and proper recreations. It is well known that there is such a class of persons in every religious denomination, who look with distrust or dislike upon all the extravagant religious measures and projects, and the fanatical opinions, that prevail around them.

Now what is the position which this class of persons occupies in the religious community? It is actually an isolated position. It is constructively a position of subserviency. They exert no influence, they take no part against those things of which they disapprove. They seek to pass quietly through the world. They take care to offend as little as possible the religious prejudices of their times. They give up to these prejudices a part of their liberty; they use another part of it, as privately and unobtrusively as they can. They think that many things around them are wrong; nay, there are not a few among them, who sometimes express a great dread of the effects of the popular fanaticism; but they say as little, they do as little as possible, openly, to withstand this sweeping tide of popular opinions and practices.

So far I conceive that they are wrong on their part. But then they are treated in a manner still more wrong. They are never consulted by the religious communities around them. Upon the very points where their advice is most needed—upon questions of doubtful religious wisdom and propriety, all resort to them is especially avoided. Thus, the influence of not a few of the best minds in the religious community, and many of them interested in religion too, is completely lost. They do not like to intrude their opinion unasked—they do not like to go and speak in public meetings when they are not called. They are *not* called, their opinion is *not* asked; and they but too naturally fold their arms—look on—criticise, with their friend, the bad measures or the bad manners of the zealots—lament, by their fireside, that religion is to suffer so much from the moroseness and folly of its professed friends—and think that this is *all* they have to do.

Can society well and safely go on, without all the light that is in it? Can it, without danger, exclude from among its guiding lights the best minds that are in it? Why, there is enough of sober and cultivated thought among us, if it could be gathered from its various religious circles into one mass of public opinion, if it could be induced to speak out—there is enough, I say, to hold in complete check all the religious extravagance, fanaticism, and asperity of the country. There is a body of men that can *produce* that state of modified and mitigated religious opinion and action, which they profess to desire. How is it to be thought strange that some parts of the country are overrun with fanaticism, if religion has been given into the hands of the most ignorant portion of the people? Shall we be told that it is an unpleasant thing to come out, and to be brow-beaten by the multitude, to be rudely assailed as the enemies of religion and of God, and, perhaps, to sacrifice all chances of social and political advancement? Then, I say, let an unpleasant thing be done. Is the religion, that has been sealed in the blood of martyrs, to demand no sacrifices of us? Nay, I say again, if martyrdom be yet required in fidelity to this benign and abused faith—then let there be martyrdoms!

But there are no martyrdoms required. There is nothing needed but that some true, liberal, kind words be spoken—frankly and freely spoken, by every reflecting man as he sees occasion; that he shrink not ignobly from his responsibility, and his place in society, but speak plainly what he thinks of religion and religious measures, and religious men; and in America, I verily believe, is a people that will hear. Many a plain, uneducated, modest man, I am persuaded, is waiting to hear that word, from those to whom he looks up as having advantages superior to his own. Ours is a country that is wide awake to improvement. Our advancing system of education, our improving prison and penitentiary discipline, our progress in religious sentiment (I mean the progress of all sects), our increasing charitable institutions, our temperance reform, all show it. The country, I repeat, is wide awake to improvement. Are the authorized pioneers of this improvement seeking to lose themselves in the crowd? Are the lawful leaders of the host cowering behind the very rear rank of the enemy? The eyes of the world are upon us. There is no argument carried on in the Old World, concerning human rights, free principles, the practicability and safety of reform—no, there is not a fireside argument here, but our country is present to offer her example and plead her cause. There is not a question about our condition, but it is here a party question; and we have defenders in this country, more zealous, more deeply interested, if possible, than we are ourselves. Heaven grant, that while we have champions in every civilized country in the world, we may not want leaders in our own; that while all this interest and sympathy are felt for us in other countries, we may not want patriotism and public spirit, manliness, fidelity, piety, virtue, victory, at home!

CHAPTER VIII.

FRANCE — WALLED TOWNS — BELGIUM — BRUSSELS — FIELD OF WATERLOO — GENAPPE — HUY — AIX LA CHAPELLE — COLOGNE — BONN — PRUSSIAN MILITARY AND SCHOOL SYSTEMS — MAYENCE — VALLEY OF THE RHINE — FRANKFORT ON THE MAINE — DARMSTADT — HEIDLEBERGH — OFFENBERG — VILLENGEN — MODE OF BUILDING.

Calais, *August* 22, 1833.—The first things that made me feel I was in France, were the chattering of the boatmen who took us off from the steam-packet, and "sacre!" rolling from the tongue of the vexed chief boatman, in the manner I have heard described, but could not well have conceived, without having heard the tone of the last syllable, actually thrilling on the tongue as it never does in the pronunciation of a foreigner.

The next new and characteristic objects that presented themselves, as we went up the quay, were the fishwomen, or fish-girls rather—for they were all young—coming down with their small nets and net frames on their shoulders, looking as stout and resolute as men; bronzed with exposure to rain, and sun, and sea; their dress not coming down to the knee, and the calf below, round and full enough to move the envy of any "lean and slippered pantaloon."

Calais, and most of the French towns of any note that we passed through on the way to Belgium, as St. Omer, Lille, &c. are surrounded by two walls, with moats (now drained of their water) and drawbridges at the gates—which gates also are regularly shut every night. In some of the towns this is done at the inconveniently early hour of nine o'clock; and no one is suffered to pass afterward.

Let the dwellers in our free, secure, unwalled, ungarrisoned cities, think of it. You cannot take a ride into the country here but through these jealously guarded gates, surrounded with cannon, and infested by an idle, expensive soldiery. You cannot take a journey here, but you must have a passport, and be subjected to perpetual interruption and examination. For my part, I could not breathe freely in these prison cities. Wherever I went, I should feel as if I walked in fetters; and wherever I abode, as if I lived in an enemy's country. And yet such will be the state of things in our own country, if it is ever broken up into half a dozen petty republics.

The change in passing from France to Belgium at Baisieux, just before entering Tournay, is very striking, altogether in favour of Belgium as to neatness, comfortable appearance of living, and houses; though I thought there was rather a Flemish heaviness about the faces of the people, neater and more comfortable as they were.

Everywhere on the route, but especially in Belgium, the women seemed to do as much, and hard, and various work as the men; they tramp about in wooden shoes, which adds a double appearance of heaviness to their movements, and almost of slavery to their condition. The country is very rich and well cultivated; but it impressed me with a strange feeling of melancholy all the while, for there seemed nothing in it but toil and its fruits; no intelligence apparently in the general countenance; no leisure, no agreeable-looking country houses, or cottages embowered with trees; no gardens, with people walking or sitting in them; no persons having the air of gentlemen or ladies, riding or walking out as we entered or left the villages and cities; and the cities and villages not wearing an inviting aspect—with close, narrow streets —irregular, old, obstinately fixed in stone against all improvement, and filled with men, women, and children, without one being of attractive appearance among them—almost without *one*.

The country on the route is remarkable for the long avenues of trees (elm, poplar, beech), all trimmed up so as to be very lofty, without any under branches. For many miles together, the road is lined on both sides with them; and ranges of trees, forming squares, triangles, and groves of parallel rows, are seen everywhere. It is doubtless a bad taste carried to such an extent; and yet I think it might intermingle with that *variety* of English scenery, for which there is such a passion in that country.

Brussels is a beautiful city, and the beauty in some parts is in an ancient and striking fashion; as on the *Grand Place*, in which is the Hotel de Ville, or Town House, a fine Gothic building, with the highest tower, it is said, in Europe. The cathedral is very large; but the want of Gothic decorations within, and especially of the clustered column, instead of which is a great ugly round column, spoils the interior. The palace of the Prince of Orange is very splendid; beautiful floors of tessellated wood through the whole suite of apartments, rich marble

walls, many fine paintings apparently—(one, portrait of a female, by Leonardo da Vinci, struck me much)—but we were not allowed to pause before them, being marched through the palace, a large company of us, in Indian file, after having moccasins slipped over our shoes, that the floors might not be injured. The park, on which are situated the palaces, and noble ranges of houses, is very fine; and the Boulevards —or rides and walks between rows of trees—surrounding the whole town, are such a charm and glory of a thing in their way, as is not, that I know, to be found anywhere else in the world.

From Brussels, the ride to the field of Waterloo is through the wood of Soigny; a noble forest of beech-trees, into which the golden beams of the setting sun streamed, like the light through stained windows into a Gothic temple.

We arrived at the field of Waterloo, nine miles from Brussels, after sunset. We ascended the mound raised in commemoration of the great engagement of June 18th, 1815. It is two hundred feet high, and has a monument on the summit, consisting of a high pedestal, on which reposes the British lion, a colossal figure and finely executed. From this elevation, every point in the position of the armies and the field of battle, is easily comprehended. It is now a ploughed field, with nothing remarkable about it; but bare and naked as it is, of everything but the interest which the *great action* gives it, I would not but have seen it. We descended and passed through the very centre of the field—the road to Genappe leading in that direction; yes, we rode quietly through that peaceful field, where, eighteen years ago, on a summer's night—the same moon shining that now lighted our way—thousands lay in the sleep of death, and thousands more lifted up, on every side, faces marked with the death-agony, and uttered wailings that measured out the long, long hours of that dreadful night. As if to complete the contrast, we heard the sound of a violin as we drove off from the battle-field, and turning aside to the quarter from whence it came, observed a dance before the door of one of the cottages.

At Genappe—a few miles distant—beneath the window of the chamber where I slept, was the street where the retreating French raised the last barrier against the pursuing Prussians and Brunswickers. Along that street sounded the fearful "hurrah!" which, as Prince Blucher's report says, drove the panic-struck soldiers of Bonaparte from their post. By the very window from which I looked, rushed the furious Prussian cavalry, which swept away the feeble barricade like chaff; and on every stone of that pavement, blood—human blood had flowed. Yet now, what but these dread recollections themselves could be more thrilling than the awful stillness, the deep repose which settled down upon that fearful spot—the moonbeams falling upon the silent walls, and upon pavements which no footstep disturbed, and seeming to consecrate all nature to prayer and love, not to wrath and destruction.

August 26.—Our ride to-day, especially down the Meuse from Namur to Liege, has been delightful; the road smooth and level; on the right the Meuse, on the left, a constant succession of cliffs, wanting only the ivy to make them almost as beautiful as the cliffs of Derbyshire in England. Some of the hills, too, were covered with vineyards, and on the meadow banks of the Meuse were the finest orchards of apple, pear, and plum trees, that I ever saw.

Huy, on the route, is beautifully situated, and its citadel, which we visited, seemed, to my inexperienced eye, a stupendous work. It is built on a hill, and its battlements rise seven hundred feet above the streets of the town. The work is very massive, and the cavernous depths to which we descended within, gave me a new idea of the magnitude and strength of a military fortress.

Indeed this whole country, and especially almost every city and town, surrounded with stupendous walls, and defended by gates, which are manned with soldiers, constantly remind you of war—constantly tell you that Europe has been a battle-field for ages, and that her princes and potentates perpetually stand upon their guard for the moment when it shall become so again. Would not a being who had never heard of war, nor of its munitions, nor of the passions that ministered to it—who saw himself surrounded at every step with citadels and battlements, and guns and swords, and men clothed in the panoply of battle—would he not think he was travelling through a country of demons? If he were acquainted with the spirit of Christianity, moreover, how would he be astonished to find these were called *Christian* countries, and their kings "*most* Christian majesties!"

The drive from Liege to Aix la Chapelle presents nothing of interest, but the surprising change from immense open fields, without any enclosures, which have surrounded us all the way from Calais, to a country very much resembling England; full of closes and hedges in all directions. It seems to me that these sudden changes in passing through the same country, from one mode of cultivation, building, and living, to another; from one set of usages and fashions to another, from one form and character of countenances to another, must show that there is by no means so free an intercourse, nor so active an intelligence abroad among the people, as in our country. And indeed the people generally appear to me to have rather a stolid aspect. They generally look more contented than our people. It would seem from appearances as if there could not be much want among them; and yet there are many beggars. There is not the sentiment of shame about begging that there would be with us. Beggar boys and girls, very comfortably clad too, will join the carriage and run along, singing out in a plaintive tone, "Un sous, monsieur, pour charite;" apparently calculating that importunity will succeed, though all other appeals fail. There is certainly something very touching in the tones of the French tongue. I have seldom felt anything of this sort more than the plea of a poor fellow I met in Lichfield (Eng.) I said to him, for he was a young man, "You look as if you could work." He seemed to understand my objection, and I am sure he annihilated it, as, the tears coming to his eyes, he said, "Jo suis etranger, pauvre, malade." And yet what to do, one knows not; for this indiscriminate giving must be bad; and this unscrupulous asking and clamorous importunity are shocking.

Aix la Chapelle, the birth and burial place of Charlemagne, the coronation city of fifty-five emperors, the scene of important treaties, and of congresses of nations, is indebted for its chief interest with the stranger to historical associations; for the town is not at all agreeable: the streets are narrow, and the houses generally ordinary. There is a fine promenade, however, on the road coming towards Cologne. The cathedral was commenced by Charlemagne. The Town House, origi-

nally a palace, and Charlemagne's birthplace, is built on the ruins of an old Roman castle, and has one tower standing, called Granus, which appears to be of Roman origin.

The celebrated springs here are so strongly impregnated with sulphur, which quality derives an increased pungency from their heat, that I found it would take more than one day to learn to drink them. Bathing in them is much more practicable, and altogether pleasant. The whole air of the city is tainted with the smell of brimstone, at times: it was so on the morning when we came out. Aix la Chapelle has thirty-three thousand inhabitants.

Cologne—from Colonia Agrippina, a Roman colony—is quite superior to most of the second-rate continental towns of Europe. The remains of the Roman power are spread through all this country.

The church of St. Mary of the Capital was built by Plectrude, wife of Pepin, and mother of Charles Martel; and in the convent adjoining and belonging to it, Mary de Medici passed in misery the last moments of her life. The house where she died is shown. It is the same in which Rubens was born.

In the church of St. Peter is a painting of the Crucifixion of Peter by Rubens, which is considered as one of his masterpieces, and is certainly very expressive. The countenance of Peter, crucified, according to tradition, with his head downward, expresses extreme agony. The faces of the executioners—of one driving the nail through the foot, full of intense and most malignant emotion; of another looking up with the air of a connoisseur at the operation, as if it were only nailing one piece of wood to another—and so of the others, are very characteristic, and powerfully drawn.

But nothing here has struck me so much as the cathedral, planned by Archbishop Engelberg, and commenced in 1248. It is yet unfinished, though the work is going forward. It is a Gothic building of immense size, larger and higher than the York Minster; and were the proportions as perfect, it would, when finished, surpass the minster. But it seemed to me that the columns were too small for the height, and I should doubt if the width were sufficient to make a just proportion. This, however, does not apply to the towers, of which the one that is highest, though not completed, is a thing so glorious and beautiful, that it makes one sigh to gaze upon it.

Bonn, *August* 30 —a pleasant town of twelve thousand inhabitants. We visited the university, saw the library—of ninety thousand volumes —and the museum of antiquities. The most interesting are the Roman antiquities; lamps, culinary vessels, funereal tablets, urns—with the ashes and bones yet in them, and altars, dug up on the banks of the Rhine, and chiefly in the vicinity of Cologne and Bonn. Little glass vials were shown us, said to be used by the Roman ladies to receive the tears of their lamentation for the dead. The inscriptions upon many of the tablets are very distinct, though from the abbreviations used in such cases, it would require some time to spell them out. Thus has the sheltering bosom of mother earth protected monumental inscriptions and records, which wind and rain would have worn out and erased ages ago; and after eighteen centuries, the names which those who loved them strove to perpetuate, are read by the inhabitants of a then unknown world. Indeed the Roman power has driven its ploughshare

through the whole valley of the Rhine, and its monuments lie so deep, that it is not till recently that many of them have been dug up and brought to light.

There are some fine fresco paintings, by Maler Gotzenberger, in one of the university rooms. They are the Faculties of Philosophy, Theology, and Law. An allegorical female figure presides over each department. Alas, for the justice of the representation! while Philosophy is beautiful, Theology is unattractive and unlovely. The Genius of Law is dignified and fine. In the Faculty of Philosophy are attempted portraits of Homer and the Greek tragedians, of Plato, Socrates, and Phidias; one of Shakspeare; and a bountiful proportion of Germans—Kant, Goethe, Schiller, &c.

We introduced ourselves to Professor A. W. Schlegel, who answered many inquiries about the state of things in Prussia—property, education, the army, &c.—all in a tone of great admiration for their government and institutions. In speaking of Goethe, he said, "We consider him the greatest poet of the age."

As to the state of things in Prussia, appearances in the *villages* we have passed through are certainly very bad. The houses are poor, the streets very filthy, and the people look miserably. Ramparts, battlements, soldiers, appear everywhere, and everything *looks* like a military despotism.

But another and more powerful army is arising in Prussia; and its spreading tents are the schoolhouses of the land. Prussia has established perhaps the most perfect system of popular education in the world. At least, it appears so on paper; I have some doubts whether its working is to produce as much intelligence as our own. Its patron and provider is the government; and hence all the machinery is likely to be more perfect. But whether the result is likely to be as good as in schools which are the objects of voluntary individual support and affection among the people, is the question.

Still, however, be all praise given to the Prussian system. Whether its formers have their eyes open to the inevitable result; whether they suspect that they are depositing an element in the popular bosom which will yet shake the foundations of the government, may well admit of more than a doubt. But that a people really educated will long endure the crushing weight of the Prussian military establishment—that they will doom themselves, and their wives, and daughters, to such unalleviated toil as lays its burden upon every limb and feature around me—that an enlightened population of thirteen or fourteen millions will consent to support nearly two hundred thousand regular troops, besides training more than three hundred thousand militia, is what no person who has studied the tendencies of modern intelligence and consequent freedom, can believe. Religion may be introduced into the system, as it is well introduced into that of Prussia; and the politician may look upon it as a useful instrument to sustain the system, or to countervail its tendencies: but the issue is as inevitable as the principles of human nature are certain.

MAYENCE.—This valley of the Rhine is, indeed, a glorious thing. It is all that I expected; it is more. The entire route from Bonn to Mayence is, as it were, through a grand gallery of the most striking objects, in the departments both of scenery and antiquities. The eye

is absolutely satiated with majestic old ruins; the imagination is wearied out with calling up the scenes of history and romance, peace and war, life and death, that have passed in them; one is exhausted and paralyzed by the burden and pressure of his thoughts and feelings; a day in riding through these scenes is as if one listened all day to inspiring and thrilling music; his musings are all sighings, and aspirations, and prayers; at every turn of the eye, he can scarcely repress his tears. The memories of a thousand years are around him at every step. At almost every great opening in the view of the banks of the Rhine, stupendous battlements and towers rise, from summit to summit, and upon one inaccessible crag after another—twenty or thirty in number, during the two days' ride—all, save one, in ruins; almost all, with one grand tower in the centre, so firmly built, that time has scarcely touched it; all built evidently for defence—upon heights so steep and stupendous, that it must have required strong heads to look down from their turrets and windows without shrinking.

These objects are indeed the most striking; but to complete the view, the hills are everywhere clothed with vineyards, the banks every now and then spread into little valleys, sometimes into broad ones, as in the Rheingau: and the noble stream, varying in width from one to two thousand feet, embosoms many islands.

There is one thing to detract from the beauty of the Rhine, as well as of all the other principal rivers in Europe that I have seen, and that is, that the waters are turbid—owing, doubtless, to the clayey soils through which they pass. They are of a whitish colour, and no sky, however pure its azure, can give them the rich hue of our American streams.

In entering, at Bingen, the duchy of Hesse Darmstadt to-day, it was curious again to observe the immediate change in houses, countenances, circumstances, manners. The frame houses, filled in with brick or other materials, almost universal in Prussia, instantly and almost completely disappear; beggars gather around the carriage again, and this, too, though the country appears just as well off, and even better; so that there must be a change of education and character to account for this, or else of police.

One thing in all these countries very much attracts our notice. All the people, literally all, live in crowded, and mostly dirty villages. Among all these rich fields and vine-clad hills, so beautiful for country-seats and cottages, there is not one house—not one. There are no fine seats in the vicinity of the towns, with a little more space and decoration about them; but all habitation is confined to the dense, compact, crowded village. This, doubtless, was originally owing to the necessity of building for defence; and now, if the people had a taste for it, they are too poor to build for pleasure, abroad in the country. I should like to know what is the effect of this village life upon society. Is it as pure? Is it not more kind, more social, less reserved, less cold?

Mayence has a very pretty entrance from the north, by a winding road through trees; but the town itself has very little attraction. To *my* eyes, too, it is a very grievous annoyance, that every fifth, literally every fifth man you meet, is a soldier; there being six thousand troops quartered in a town of twenty-six thousand inhabitants.

We visited a gallery of paintings which has some original pieces by

the masters. An "Assumption of the Virgin," by Annibal Carracci, in which the Supreme Being is represented as a venerable man—a conception quite shocking indeed; but when you throw away that idea, which you may easily do, for it is difficult to retain it, the painting of that countenance is very fine: also, a "Mary presenting to a Carmelite the habit of his order," by Carracci. The upward, reverent gaze of the old man, the loveliness of the virgin, were things to dwell upon for some moments at least. A very beautiful old painting of St. Appollonia, by Dominichino; a "Lot and his Daughters," by Michael Angelo—the fire, eagerness, and fondness of intoxication in the poor old man, with his hand outstretched towards the bowl—into which one of the daughters is pouring wine—and the beauty of the daughters, are the points of attraction: nor is the appearance of the outpoured wine to be forgotten. A "La Petit Jesus," by Jacques Jordan—*i.e.* Jesus teaching in the temple—nothing good but the appearance of the Jewish doctors, and that was very striking; some of them in the colouring of the flesh, by the bye, singularly like those heads of Jews by Alston, exhibited a year or two ago at the Boston Athenæum.

Frankfort on the Maine is worthy of its old fame, of its historical associations, and of being the seat of the Germanic Diet. Some of the streets are gloriously ancient in their appearance; and the modern ones have very good buildings, and all are very neat. There are fine seats, too, in the environs, reminding us, for the first time, of the neighbourhoods of our own cities. The walls, too, and fortifications, like those of Brussels, are levelled; but instead of being planted with regular rows of trees, they are laid out in winding walks, interspersed with shrubbery and trees. The cathedral here is a very ancient-looking pile, and the tower with its pinnacles is very grand; the style pure Gothic. There are some old houses here of a very extraordinary appearance. They are very small on the ground, and at the same time very lofty; and being covered entirely, not only on the roof, but the sides, with small, black, shining pieces of slate, they look like giants clad in ancient armour.

Darmstadt—a beautiful town, with fine avenues through rows of linden trees, on the road to Mayence, and also southward. The chief attraction to us, however, was the gallery of pictures (six or eight hundred in number) in the palace of the Duke of Hesse Darmstadt. Some beautiful ruins and landscapes, by Schonberger; two admirable winter pieces, by Fosei; a striking portrait, by Lanterre; animals, by Sneyder; a St. John, by Corregio. By Titian, a "Sleeping Venus"—the face particularly—the flush, the fulness of deep sleep—the something almost like delicate perspiration. By Dominichino, a "David and Nathan—Thou art the man!"—the prophet standing above the king, who shrinks back in his chair, with a fear-stricken aspect—the prophet's dignity and fixed eye. By Schmidt, a "Diana and Nymphs bathing"—exquisite beauty of form and softness of outline. "Adam and Eve," also by Schmidt—(German)—a painting of great power. Adam and Eve are flying from paradise; in the back ground the sky lowers with a tempest, and lightning flashes vengeance across the dark cloud. Adam's countenance and brow especially, are full of suppressed, sustained, and manly sorrow; Eve leans upon his breast, as they hurry along, with her face to the ground, and with such an expression of fear

in the eye — of fear, not agonizing, but clear, bright, *spirituelle*, subdued, modest, feminine, as, I think, I can never forget. The contrast of manly strength and female loveliness, in the picture, is very striking. But last and greatest of all, is Rembrandt's portrait of his second wife — so beautiful, so natural, so speaking, so heavenly, in the expression of the bright, calm, pure, and almost living eye, that I could have kneeled before it as a Catholic does before the Virgin Mary.

Heidelberg.—The situation very delightful, on the banks of the Neckar. The ruins of the castle, on the brow of the hill southward, are more beautiful far than any castellated ruin I have seen in England; said by Scheiber's Guide-Book to be also the most beautiful in Germany. The walls are standing, in very good preservation, and are ornamented, I should judge, with not less than eighty or one hundred statues, also very perfectly preserved. These, with the niches and canopies, and the work in and over the windows, together with many armorial bearings, present a vast proportion of sculpture, though the building is not Gothic. An immensely deep fosse surrounds the castle; there is a fine paved esplanade in front, and another behind it, laid out with walks, and embowered with trees; and the views, up the Neckar, through richly wooded and vine-clad hills, and downward upon the town, and beyond, upon a broad and boundless plain, watered by the same river, also stretching towards the Rhine — are exceedingly fine.

Heppenheim, on the road from Darmstadt to Heidelberg, is situated amid very charming scenery. The majestic ruin of Starkenburg Castle is on a neighbouring height. At Bensheim, not far from Heppenheim, we saw, for the first time in Europe, Indian corn.

Offenburg, *September* 5.—We are still in the valley of the Rhine, though at some distance from the river. The scenery for the last day or two more resembles that of our Connecticut river, than anything else; but the ruin of an old castle, now and then appearing on the neighbouring hills, is a feature which is never to appear in the landscapes of the Connecticut. The time of feudal sovereignties and castles has gone by in the civilized world. Princely dwellings, indeed, are built, and will be built; but they are no longer perched upon almost inaccessible crags and mountains, to be forsaken when the times of danger have passed away. The English castles now in ruins were not, indeed, so inconveniently situated; but still they were built for defence, and not for comfort, and have been given up, as much from their inconvenience as from their insecurity. We have been struck to-day with the picturesque and almost fantastic dress of the people; the men, and even young men, with the immensely broad-brimmed hat, which appears in many of Rembrandt's pictures, and the women showing a singular passion for the colour of scarlet. The throng, gathered in the village market-places, most of whom, by the bye, are women — they are the sellers in market — wears an appearance as strange and bizarre almost as would an assembly of Turks.

There is, in short, no business or labour, apparently, which the women of this country do not perform. In the morning, we always meet great numbers of them, either going to the fields with hoe and shovel in hand, or to the markets with the basket of vegetables or fruit upon their heads. This toil and exposure bereaves them of every

feminine charm of person; though their countenances are not unamiable, nor more dull or coarse than might be expected in the circumstances. We learn from the attentive and sensible keeper of the Fortune Hotel here (to whom I commend all weary travellers passing through Offenburg), that women as regularly hire themselves out to work in the field, as men, and at nearly the same price—being eighteen sous for the women, and twenty-one sous for the men, per day—they providing partly for themselves—*i. e.* they take soup for breakfast at home; their employer provides bread and a pint of wine for their dinner, they adding meat and eggs if they choose; and they expect supper from their employer.

Villengen, *September* 6.—To-day we have been passing through the Black Forest; by which is meant, not a continuous wood, nor a level country covered with forest, but a succession of hills, clothed with fir-trees principally, and looking dark enough justly to give its name to this extensive tract of country. Many of these hills wear a singular aspect; the foliage being bright and glossy, as well as dark; and the forms, bold and beautiful. The road, for thirty miles from Offenburg, leads up a small river, and through a delightful valley, which eventually becomes very picturesque and wild, and very much like what I expect in the scenery of Switzerland. The inhabitants, too, wear, I am told, the Swiss costume, and build their houses in the Swiss fashion: the former, that is to say, wearing large hats, and the latter an immense pent-house roof, much in the same style. They look—the houses—very comfortable, though they must be very dark; and are delightfully scattered up and down among the hills and valleys—a thing we have scarcely seen before on our whole journey upon the Continent.

We saw a funeral procession to-day, of a very singular appearance. The coffin—it was that of an infant—was borne by a woman, on her head. A boy came after her, with a crucifix, bound with ribbons and covered with flowers. Then followed a few men, and a considerable number of women, walking two and two—the women having black gauze caps on their heads, with a fringe of black lace, nearly covering the forehead, and singing a low funereal chant.

With regard to these large projecting roofs of the houses, and indeed the whole style of them—for they quite commonly embrace domicile, stable, woodhouse, carthouse, and barn, all under one roof—I cannot help again remarking how suddenly, just in passing from one village to another, this new scene presented itself. Certainly, these people cannot be like *our* countrymen; who, if they are about to build a house, or to do anything else, observe, as they pass through the country, how others are doing, and what improvements are to be made. The result, among *us*, is a great deal of variety, and a continual progress. But the people here, either never travel, or they never think—never observe anything; else it would be impossible for them to settle down, each village for itself, into this unbroken uniformity. And, indeed, they have nothing like the look of intelligence, of alertness and inquisitiveness of mind, that are seen in America.

CHAPTER IX.

SWITZERLAND — SCHAFFHAUSEN — OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH ON THE CONTINENT — COMPARISONS OF THE GENERAL ASPECT AND MANNERS OF THE PEOPLE ON THE ROUTE, WITH THOSE OF OUR COUNTRY — FALLS OF THE RHINE — ZURICH — ZUG — RIGHI — WILLIAM TELL — LUCERNE — THUN.

SCHAFFHAUSEN (SWITZERLAND), *September* 8.—We entered Switzerland about ten miles north of this, and the entrance was most appropriate. We had scarcely passed the boundary stone, with Baden inscribed upon it, when there sunk down a deep and narrow valley on our right—deep as if it were placed out of this world, and looking calm, undisturbed, silent, and sequestered, as if it did not belong to this world. We soon descended into it; and with a glorious and gorgeous vista of autumn-painted hills constantly opening before us, we rode all the way to Schaffhausen.

To-day is Sunday, and we are resting at this place. The Sabbath, all over the continent of Europe, it is well known, is partly a holiday. I confess that I was extremely desirous of observing what was the character and effect of this holiday; what kind of relaxation was permitted by the usages of the European churches, both Catholic and Protestant, on Sunday. I had anticipated some modification of the common holiday. I had thought it likely, that relaxation for one part of the day, connected with religious services on the other, would possess a character of unusual decorum. And in this I am not disappointed, unless it be, that I find everywhere, in all the villages and cities which I have had an opportunity of observing on Sunday, a quietness and decorum quite beyond my expectation. The population is all abroad, indeed, after the hours of divine service, in the streets and the public places; but it seems to suffice the people to take a quiet walk with their families; and there is a remarkable restraint among the multitudes upon all noise, loud talking, and laughter.

I state the fact as it is, and as a matter, certainly, of gratifying information. But I cannot conceal that it presents to me a very serious question. And the question is, how far it is desirable that *our* Sabbath-keeping should partake of the European character. There is much, doubtless, to be objected against the European mode. The day seems to be entirely spent in public—in public worship, or in the public walks. It seems to have no distinct moral object with the people around me. Now this is what, above all things, I would secure. But whether the object is best secured by the views and usages that prevail among us is the question.

We ought, on this subject, to look at the general principles on which time is to be used to the best account; or on which, in other words, time is to be devoted and hallowed to religious uses. Suppose I wish to set apart a day to any intellectual or moral use. How shall I best arrange it? And here let me say, that I know of nothing in the Scriptures that forbids the application of such general reasoning. To sanctify a day is, to set it apart for a religious purpose; and the ques-

tion is, *how* is that purpose to be best accomplished? Now I say, that if I were to arrange the employments of any day, in order to turn its hours to the greatest account for my mind or heart, I should not devote *all* its hours to study, reading, meditation, or prayer. That is to say, in other words, I must give some of its hours to relaxation. And this is what any man does of necessity, let his creed or system be what it will.

So that the only question is, what *sort* of relaxation a man shall give himself. Shall it be taken within doors, or abroad? Shall a man sit down in a sort of superstitious stupor, as thinking that there is something in gloom and dulness that is peculiarly acceptable to heaven? or shall he go forth under the open sky, and amid the fresh breezes? Shall he *sleep* away some hours of the day, or spend them in easy conversation and useful exercise? Which mode of relaxation—for relaxation there must be—will be most favourable to health, to cheerfulness, and to agreeable associations with the sabbath?

But it may be said, that it is dangerous to depart from the old strictness, and that the people will go fast enough and far enough, without being helped on in their course. I grant that there is danger arising from the boundless freedom of the country. I certainly fear that the innocent relaxations of the Sabbath might go to excess and disorder. But may we not hope, that an intelligent and wholesome public opinion is to lay restraints as effectual as bayonets and a police? Besides, the danger exists, whether we discuss the subject or not. Is it not better to take the right and tenable ground at once, than to take a wrong ground which is continually sliding beneath our feet, and bearing us and everything else with it? Yet more: licentiousness is not the only danger. There is danger in bondage, too. For what, I ask, is the effect and result of the old strictness? Some, it makes demure and superstitious on Sunday; others, it makes reckless. They take greater liberties with the day than the most of those who make it a holiday in Europe! They ride, they travel, they labour, they haunt taverns, they engage in hunting and fishing, they write letters of business; they cannot banish the spirit of business even from one day out of seven. Many, and especially of the young, are perhaps still more injured by the old strictness. They dislike the Sabbath. They dread its approach; they are glad when it is gone. And as the Sabbath is most closely associated with religion, they come to get repulsive ideas of religion itself. It is a gloomy thing; it is a superstition; it is a peculiarity; it is a bondage. It is something to be endured; it is something to be sighed about, rather than acted upon; and the result is, that it exerts no genial, no welcome, no thorough nor permanent influence upon the heart. In short, false views of the Sabbath are answerable for no small portion of that host of dreadful popular errors which deform Christianity, degrade its disciples, cut off from the world so many sources of happiness, and open, in the very bosom of life, so many fountains of sadness, dejection, and misery.

On the whole, as a sabbatarian, I am inclined to be at once very strict and very liberal. I would have a more practical and pious use made of the day, than is common with us. I would have as many hours devoted to public worship and to private reading and meditation, as can profitably be given. The right ground on this subject seems to

me to be high ground. No hours in the year should be more busy, more absorbing, more sacred to effort and improvement, than Sabbath hours. No hours in the merchant's counting-room, or at the student's desk, should be more earnestly devoted. But this done, I would give the utmost freedom to all innocent, decorous, and quiet relaxation. I believe that this disposition of time would give us a day far more interesting, useful, and happy. I am persuaded, that this spreading of superstitious restraints over the whole day, tends at once to weaken the springs of those religious exercises, and of those recreative, social, and domestic enjoyments, for which it was alike though not equally ordained.

There is an air about the people at Schaffhausen that pleases me more than anything I have seen on the Continent. We meet bright, intelligent faces everywhere; the people appear more cheerful; we hear laughter oftener; the children look happier; we see groups of them, and they have books in their hands, and are well dressed and neat. In the houses, too, we see people at the open windows: there is not that dreadful solitariness and seclusion that appear in the better class of houses, throughout most of the continental cities. Indeed, where the better sort of people — the people of condition, or learning, or wealth, or leisure, or taste — *are*, in these countries, I cannot devise. Few equipages, no saunterers, no fashionable or contemplative walkers, no riders out—nothing, or nearly nothing, of all this, which is so commonly seen in and near all our American cities and villages, appears here. The toiling multitude — men with sober brow, women with faces weather-beaten and shorn of every feminine grace, dull children, or the starched, stupid, or fierce-looking soldier—this is almost the entire population that meets the eye of the traveller. Now there must, of course, be other people; but they must be few, and their habits secluded.

In speaking of the general air of the people, I should not forget the extreme courtesy that pervades all classes, and especially the lower classes. No one of these ever speaks to you without touching his hat. The very grooms and horseboys never forget this. If they have no hat, they put their hand where the hat should be. The common people, too, as we pass them, really tax our courtesy, unless we would consent to be outdone in politeness. At the hotels, too, landlords, waiters, valets, are all at your service: you are assisted out of your carriage; you are ushered into your room with a bow; you have dinner announced with a bow; every one of the limbs and senses of those around you is at your bidding — is alert and instinct with obedience — is ready to say, if it could speak, "Oui, monsieur." This, to be sure, is, at the hotels, partly mercenary; but it belongs in part, also, to the general manners of the people.

The fashion of salutation on the Continent is always to take off the hat; and this is done not to superiors alone, but among the country people, from one to another, constantly. I wish it were the fashion everywhere. Our manners in America are too brief, gruff, and hasty. Our "no" and "yes" are very short words; and if we add "sir" to them, that again is an unfortunate monosyllable; and the whole intercourse, I mean the out-of-door intercourse, of our people, seems to me, compared with what I see here, monosyllabic, brief, and ungracious. Is it fanciful to suppose that something of this depends on the very words of salutation, with which different languages provide us?

Oui, monsieur, and *Si, signore,* always seems to come softly and kindly from the mouths of French and Italians; and they cannot well be pronounced as gruffly as Yes, sir, and No, sir. At any rate, the difference in manners is great, and in my judgment it shows altogether to our disadvantage. When a man here meets his fellow-labourers in the morning, he says, "Bon jour, messieurs," and has time, while he is saying it, to take off his hat to his neighbours. It is a good and kind beginning of the labours of the day: there is something almost courtly in it. What a contrast to the manner with which you may often see a man meet his neighbour, in one of our New England villages. "Morning!" he says—I suppose he means, "Good morning, sir," or "Good morning," at least—but he says, "Morning!"—but half raising his eyes, perhaps, in civility, from the ground—and his hat as fast upon his head as if he had worn it all night. Ask a man *here* if he knows the way to a certain place, and if he does not know, as it is very likely he will not, he has, at least, the grace of manner to make his ignorance agreeable—which is more than you can say of many people's knowledge. "Non, monsieur, pardonnez," he says, and takes off his hat. In America, a man would often answer your question with a "No, sir," or, "No, I don't," and turn upon his heel.

I believe that utility and philosophy have more to do with these things than we may imagine. The manners of life are the chief language of its affections. If that language be abrupt and harsh, there is some danger that the affections may take their tone from it. Manners infect the mind. And the mind of an ill-bred people is likely, at length, to become coarse and degraded. There is a morality in street salutations. And I have often thought, that a man of a harsh and repulsive demeanour might give more pain, as he passed through the street to his home, than he could give pleasure or do good, if, when he arrived there, he should distribute the most liberal alms.

Are not the manners of our people becoming less courteous? Are they not less so than they were fifty years ago? When we speak of the "manners of the old school," do we not imply this? Must republican institutions always be found hostile to the gracefulness and refinement of life? I do not believe it. And yet much is to be done and taught among us. We do exceedingly want some *Censor morum*, some *Spectator redivimus;* and if I could direct the pens that wrote Salmagundi, I would engage them in this work.

The Falls of the Rhine are three miles below Schaffhausen. They are glorious and beautiful; but who shall describe a waterfall? Every particle a living thing: a whole mighty river hurled, amid the thunders of its descent, into spray and foam—the drifted snow not whiter nor lighter—and, indeed, if mighty snow-banks were, in succession, driven by a sweeping storm over a precipice seventy feet high, I do not know but it would more resemble the Falls of the Rhine, than anything else I can think of.

The waters of the Rhine here are perfectly pure and transparent, and have a colour of the deepest green, for which I cannot account. This colour, purity, and a rapid flow, make it, at this point, the most beautiful of rivers.

Before I leave the notices of Schaffhausen, I must just mention, what I have seen nowhere but on one small house-front in Frankfort,

the fresco paintings covering the whole front of several old houses here. They consist, some of them, of considerable numbers of figures. On one is an allegorical representation of all the cardinal virtues—a good admonition, certainly, to the dwellers within.

Zurich, *September* 9.—From Schaffhausen to this place (thirty miles) we came on an excellent road, through a highly cultivated and delightful country. The ride to-day, and the entrance to Zurich—Switzerland, in short, as far as I have seen it—has seemed to me more like home than anything I have looked upon since I landed at Calais. Welcome as the impression might be thought, there are pretty serious abatements from the pleasure. To "an exile from home," it is some relief to have everything around him strange; the scene is in harmony with his lot. But be this as it may, there are many things here—the bright and happy faces, the groups of children going to school with book in hand, the dwellings scattered up and down through the country, the environs of Zurich filled with beautiful country-seats—which remind one of America. I must add, however, that the villages which I have seen in Switzerland—those, I mean, of two or three thousand people—are very filthy; as bad, I think, as those of Ireland. Before every door is the steaming, stercoraceous heap; the manure of the farm is made under the very windows. Swiss country cottages are one thing; but for all romance about their villages—alas for it!* At Eglisau, to-day, we parted company with Father Rhine, not without some emotion.

Zurich is built on both sides of the Limmat, at the point where it issues from the Lake of Zurich. The colour of the water, green almost as an emerald, the swiftness of the current, like the Rhine, gives to this river, as well as that, an aspect of life and beauty almost unrivalled.

At Zug† we took a boat to Geinser (though it had been better, perhaps, to have gone to Art), to ascend the Righi; Righi Culm, as the top is called, which Mr. Simond thinks is a contraction for *Culmen Reginæ Montium*; the Summit of the Queen of Mountains. It may have obtained such a name from its standing alone, and commanding a better view than any other in Switzerland.

Our ride from Zurich to Zug presented fine views from the top of Mount Albis (over which, by the bye, we were drawn by four horses and two *cows*)—the whole Lake of Zurich being at one time in sight; but it was on the Lake of Zug that we had the first view, properly, of Alpine scenery—and it was, of course, sublime. But to multiply epithets would be to convey no impression; and I can only tell you to resort to measurements. There is Righi directly before you; six thousand feet high; the mighty gate of the Alps; rising up almost perpendicularly from the soft and shaded bosom of the lake. Pontius Pilatus, with its sharp pinnacles, about seven thousand five hundred feet high, lies a little to the right, and farther back. On the left is a range of hills wooded to the top, and terminating in Rossberg; down which, in 1806, was the tremendous slide of earth, which buried Goldau and its sister villages—five or six in all, with an hundred houses and five hundred inhabitants. Pontius Pilatus took its name from a legend,

* The beautiful villages of Lucerne show how dangerous it is to generalize.

† Pronounced Zoog. Pronounce *u* like *oo* in almost all names on the Continent. Thun—Toon, &c.

which holds, that Pilate drowned himself in a dark lake (Mare Infernale) on its top.

It is quite a point with travellers to see the sun set and rise on Righi. We did not reach the summit in time to see him set, nor indeed would it have availed much; for he went down in clouds. We passed the night at an inn on the mountain, and in the morning, at five o'clock, were on the top, with many others, to see his rising. Here again our success was not complete; nor is the full measure of gratification obtained, we were told, one time in forty. However, we were compensated at every step: the morning view was enough of itself, although not perfect, to repay all the toil of the ascent. Looking south, the whole inner circle of the Alps was spread before us, with its hundred dark pinnacles—their bases and fissures covered and filled with snow that never melts away. Never certainly; for now was the end of summer. Back of us, in contrast to this, was spread out, as far as the eye could see, a tract of cultivated country. On the right was Pontius Pilatus. On the left, and almost beneath our feet, were the ruins of Goldau; appearing scarcely more than a dark scathe on the brow of Rossberg. How like the path of calamity, seen from the distance of years, or from the cold heights of worldly prosperity! The dread avalanche of earth that whelmed one hundred families in ruin, appeared but as a furrow on the mountain's side! Simond says that the view from Righi embraces three fourths of Switzerland, three hundred miles in circumference, and fourteen lakes.

These awful heights, and the secluded recesses among them, consecrated, as they might seem to be, from human violence, have often been the seat of war. Not only were they so in the days of the Reformation—for Zuinglius fell on a field of battle in sight from Righi Culm—but in the later days of the French revolutionizing conflicts. From the two summits of Righi, separated by a defile, the French and Russians fired for some time at one another from batteries, which, however, did no harm. To the southwest lay buried amid mountains the small canton of Underwalden, where the French, in '98, committed such dreadful atrocities. To the southeast, and far distant, ran the Muotte Thal, the defile through which Suwarrow, with twenty thousand Russians, was making his way from Italy, when he was met and overthrown by the French general Massena.

Righi, with the country and lakes around it, is the land of William Tell. It was on the Vier Waldstatter See, or Lake of the Four Cantons,* that Tell, in a tempest, escaped from the boat in which Bailiff Gessler was bearing him as a prisoner. Gessler rode out the tempest, and landed at Brunnen; and thence proceeded towards his chateau on the north side of Righi, the ruins of which are still shown. But Tell waylaid and shot him. A chapel, called William Tell's Chapel, is built on the spot which tradition has assigned to this act of vengeance. We passed by and entered it on our way to Kusnacht, which is at the foot of Righi.

On the morning of the eleventh of September we came down the Righi, and took boat for Lucerne. The sail is absolutely glorious. On the left, and in front, the stupendous Alps, rising mountain above

* Lucerne, Underwalden, Schweitz, and Uri.

mountain, their snowy heights retiring one behind another, and rising height above height, till it seemed as if they stretched away beyond the earth's horizon, to the verge of some other creation. On the right lay a bank of verdure, orchards, groves, and cottages, beautiful as the other part was sublime. The lake, too, was a perfect mirror, and presented in its pure and transparent depths, all this glorious array of objects, every pinnacle, cottage, field, and tree, distinct as in the scene that surrounded us. But when we rounded the headland and opened the bay (so to call the upper part of the lake) on which Lucerne is situated, the scenery of the lake reached its highest interest. We were sailing almost under a high and rocky barrier; Lucerne was before us, with its white walls and houses, seated like a swan upon the bosom of the waters; around it and along down on either shore, the fields, orchards, and groves rose in every variety of graceful outline; behind us were "the everlasting hills." One pinnacle, in particular, far off, towered among the clouds, and appeared like a pyramid upon the heights of some more gigantic creation.

Eschlismatt, *September* 12.—We have come from Lucerne to this place, not for the sake of scenery, but to take the shortest route to Thun, and thus to reach the southern Alps. We have passed through a country, however, of considerable Swiss scenery, and we have been particularly struck by the appearance of the people and of their habitations. The people still wear the same appearance of cheerfulness that I have already noticed. We stopped at a tavern where a shower had driven many of the labourers. They were eating and drinking, but quite as much engaged in sprightly conversation; for the people in this quarter of the world seem to sit down to their meals quite as much to talk as to eat.

As to the houses—this is the canton of Lucerne—a larger proportion of them on the route to-day have been substantial, in good repair, and in outward appearance comfortable, than in any equal extent of country over which I have ever travelled. Scarcely one dwelling has appeared in about thirty miles, that would be marked by the traveller as the habitation of indigence. The villages, as well as the houses scattered in the country, have appeared extremely neat.

Is it not the reason why the Swiss are not cooped up in villages like the rest of the nations on the Continent, that they have always stood as neutrals in the wars of Europe, and therefore have not undertaken to put themselves in a state of defence? Is not their national freedom, too, which they have always more or less enjoyed, the cause of the superior intelligence and cheerfulness which appear among the body of them?

As to the measure of intelligence, I am aware that I am not entitled to make up any very confident opinion; but for the evidences of cheerfulness, I have seen more smiling faces in three days in this country, I have witnessed more animated conversation, I have heard more hearty laughter, and more songs among these mountains, than I have met with in passing through a portion of France, Belgium, Prussia, and Germany; nay, the Swiss seem to me a more joyous people than the English. Songs from the hills around, and from the lake below, followed me all the way as I walked up Righi.

Thun, *September* 13.—This morning, as we left Eschlismatt, the

appearance of the Alps on the south was very striking; immense, irregular masses of mountain, sharply defined on the clear morning sky, and looking like the stupendous fragments of a broken up world.

The aspect of the country, till we came upon Thun, has been rather less pleasing than it was yesterday; but the signs of competence among the people are still the same. Surely people must be well off who build such houses; the roof projecting over, so as to cover almost twice as much space as the house itself; and having enough timber in it, I might almost say, to build a comfortable house; and then the shingles on the roof, and sides also, of the house, are so small, and so carefully rounded and shaped at the ends, as to require, in building, a vast deal of work. The houses, too, are immensely large.

Both the dwellings and the appearance of the people would seem to indicate that there is great equality among them. If there be *gentlemen* or *ladies* in this country, one is ready to ask, where are they? They certainly do not appear. Neither do I see any persons that I should take to be physicians, lawyers, or clergymen.

As to ladies, if none of the women are dressed as such, yet they certainly do not fail to be very much dressed. The costume of the canton of Lucerne especially is very showy. A black cap, with beads wrought into it, and a border of lace; the hair in braids falling below the waist; the stomacher of black velvet, embroidered with beads of various colours; the sleeves full, and always white, and a sort of armlet of black, reaching from the elbow to the wrist, and tight; the petticoat dark coloured, blue or brown, of taffeta stuff, often embroidered around the border, and terminating a little below the knee; and the feet always dressed with comfortable stockings and shoes. And this, too, is the common dress of the Lucernese women, young and old, in the field and in the market, in the house and by the way. It seems favourable to agility; and yet the movements and forms of these women are very clumsy, and comeliness is very rare among them. Their taste in dress, we could not help remarking, is singularly like that of our North American Indians.

Of the scenery of Switzerland, thus far, the characteristic is not, as I expected it would be, *wildness;* but striking contrasts—the loveliest valleys, between bold hills; cultivation, surpassing, if possible, that of England, carried up among the rocks, and spreading among steep precipices and dark groves of fir, the richest verdure in the world. Certainly there is no *verdure* like that of Switzerland. Like all high countries, it is full of springs, and visited with constant showers. The grass, too, is frequently mowed—three, four, and five times in the summer—which gives to the fields, oftentimes, the appearance of a smooth-shaven English park.

The elevation of the country, also, gives a singular character to the rivers and brooks. They rush forth from their fountains and lakes, with a swiftness, with an aspect of life, as if, unchained and set free from the ice-bound prisons of the Alps, they were hurrying to the broad and fair fields of Germany, and France, and Italy, rejoicing to spread verdure and beauty through the world.

I wonder that travellers have not said more of some of these Swiss towns. I have spoken of Lucerne. Thun, too, is another glorious spot. It is situated on the Aar, about a mile from its rushing forth from the

Lake of Thun, or Thuner See. A beautiful valley, of five or six miles circuit, spreads to the west of the town, terminated by the magnificent mountain barrier of the Stockenberg—dark, severe, with a broken and irregular outline—and relieved, to-day, against a sky of the purest autumnal serenity. Southward lies the lake; and beyond, forty miles distant probably, but seeming much nearer, rise the snowy summits of the Jungfrau, Silverhorn, and the Eigers—mountains between eleven and twelve thousand feet in height, their loftiest and sharpest pinnacles perfectly white, and looking precisely like the forms of our snowbanks after a driving storm. Their immense elevation, with this dazzling whiteness, makes them appear more like things of heaven than of earth.

We went during the afternoon to view the church, the Pavillon de Jacques, and the grove southward, on the lake. The last rays of the setting sun upon the snow-capped Alps, the bright waters of the lake, the soft and solemn shadows of the descending evening, upon the western mountains, the serene depths of a September sky above them—these are the features of the scene. But words are not paintings; and no paintings can do justice to such scenes as these. And yet, the scenes themselves, what are they in all their majesty of form and beauty of colouring, compared with what they are as emblems of our thought—temples and ministrations of religion. "So," I said as I walked homeward, "let the last shadow steal over me, soft and solemn; the bright waters of life at my feet—for not a cynic would I die; and the serene and illimitable depths of heaven above me—for I would die a Christian."

CHAPTER X.

EXCURSION TO THE OBERLAND—SAIL DOWN THE LAKE OF THUN—UNTERSEEN AND INTERLAKEN—VALLEY OF LAUTERBRUNNEN—WENGERNALP—JUNGFRAU—AVALANCHES—THE EIGERS—GRINDELWALD—THE GLACIER—CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE—SWISS SONGS—RETURN TO THUN—ROAD TO BERNE—LAKE OF NEUFCHATEL—CASTLE GRANDSON—BATTLE-FIELD OF CHARLES THE BOLD AND THE SWISS—YVERDUN—LAUSANNE—GENEVA.

On a most beautiful September morning (the fourteenth instant), we set out on an excursion to the high Alps, and the glaciers of Grindelwald. We left our carriage, and took a boat at Thun, to go down to Neuhaus, at the bottom of the lake, on our way to the mountains. These boats on the Swiss lakes are almost uniformly rowed in part by women. We had two on the Zug, and one to-day.

Scarcely a finer day in the year could have been chosen to witness those effects of light, those contrasts of light and shade, which are certainly among the most striking things in mountain scenery. All the morning there was not a cloud in the sky, save one, that rested like a halo on the distant peak of Jungfrau. And whatever may be said about the effect of clouds and mists upon the mountain tops, and whatever it may be in fact, nothing seems to me to give such sublimity to them as a clear and cloudless sky. Then they appear to be invested with that

awful serenity, which is to me their sublimest attribute; and then, too, they seem to pierce, not the clouds only, but the very heavens.

There was a very striking effect of light and shade as we came down the lake, which I suppose one might be here forty days, and not see: for everything depends on the light, and the state of the atmosphere. There was a slight veil, like that of our Indian summer, upon the surrounding hills; and aided by this, the mountain of Arbendberg, though it was ten o'clock in the morning, cast so deep a shadow upon the lake, that a boat, sailing in that direction, seemed to be advancing into a region of awful and perilous obscurity, and, indeed, it was soon lost to the sight entirely. At the same time, the rays of the sun, streaming over the mountain upon the village of Derlingen, situated on the shore beneath, presented it in the boldest relief and the most splendid colouring; and yet, one single foot (so it seemed) beyond the line of light, it was so dark, that, although only a mile distant, we mistook rocks for houses, and were speculating, before our guide undeceived us, upon the condition of the adjacent dwellings as being like that of the antipodes. There was a deep dun colour upon the shore, and a rich dark hue of green upon the adjacent water, which, if brought with the other striking features of the landscape altogether into a painting, would be thought, like many actual scenes of life, if brought into fiction, to be very unnatural and extravagant.

We reached Neuhaus a little after ten o'clock, and took a char-a-banc to Interlaken. Surely one may wander over the world and find few places so beautiful as this. The inns and boarding-houses here, show that it is the resort of many strangers. It is a small valley upon the Aar, full of trees, of which a great number of old walnut trees are the most remarkable—with a steep and stupendous mountain barrier on the east, the Lake of Brientz not far to the northeast, and westward a vista, opening through majestic mountains, up the valley of Lauterbrunnen, to the shining heights of the Jungfrau.

Up this valley, after dinner, we rode, struck with new admiration at every step. It is a pass through mountains, rising, often perpendicularly, to the height of two and three thousand feet; standing out boldly into the clear sky, and measuring, as the eye was raised to them, sometimes a whole third part of the arch of heaven; and presenting almost every variety of aspect, broad barriers, sharp pinnacles, deep shadow, bright sunlights, rocky precipices on the one side, and on the other, peasants' cottages rising, with redeemed soil about them, on terrace above terrace, to the very top. The Wengernalp is on the left hand, and presents, at its western termination on this road, an immense circular precipice,* so much resembling a tower, that, as the eye catches it from time to time, one feels inadvertently as if it *were* the citadel of some mighty though unfinished palace of the Alps.

The Falls of Staubbach, at the end of our ride in the valley, is the descent (nine hundred feet) of a very small stream of water, which is almost dissipated into spray before it reaches the bottom of the precipice. One is disappointed, perhaps, after hearing so much about it, and yet it is something very bizarre and beautiful. If it is a trifle, it is yet a trifle on the mighty scale of Alpine scenery. Since I

* Hunnenflue.

have talked about Alpine pyramids and palaces, I would venture to say, that if there were an Alpine bird of paradise, the Fall of Staubbach would be its tail—the most beautiful thing, certainly, in the splendid cabinet of ornithology.

The village of Lauterbrunnen, where we passed the first night, lies directly beneath Jungfrau and Silverhorn; and those snowy tops which have heretofore been distant, were now so near, that it seemed as if we might throw a stone to them.

This vicinity of eternal snow—of winter, in fact, where there is no vegetation—to the brightest verdure; this contrast, which is either directly before you, or which a single sweep of the eye brings into view, is one of the most striking things in Alpine scenery. The masses of snow descend to a certain point on the sides of the mountains; and at that very point vegetation commences, the cattle feed, and even up between the fields of snow, those eternal fastnesses of winter, the dark line of firs is seen pushing its way and struggling to maintain its ground. At the bottom of the glacier of Grindelwald, though the mass of ice rises two hundred feet in perpendicular height, yet at the very base, within twenty feet, are trees, shrubbery, and herbage, and cottages near at hand. Surely if there ever were contrasts in nature, they are here. There was a point in ascending the Wengernalp, where this was very striking. Behind, and plainly in sight, lay the villages of Interlaken and Unterseen, in the bright sunlight and in the sweetest valley seclusion; before us, towered the Jungfrau and thundered the avalanche.

But I am a little before my story. On the second day of our excursion, at seven o'clock of a beautiful morning, we began to ascend the Wengernalp; my companions on horseback, and myself on foot; our force consisting of the domestique (as the body servant is always called on the Continent), the guide, and two men to take care of the horses; and our outfit, a good pile of sandwiches, and a bottle of vin de Lacote. We reached the highest point of our destination in three hours and a half; and I could not help thinking of it more than once, that before the sun had called my American friends to a new day, he had lighted us all the way up the mountain side, glancing upon rock and stream, spreading his golden rays upon one rocky barrier after another, and kindling the snow-clad pinnacles as with a thousand fires. In ascending the Wengernalp, we go up a mountain to see a mountain; the object is not to reach the very summit of the Wengernalp (which travellers do not), but to gain a station from which to survey Jungfrau, and I may add the two Eigers—the largest of which, though not quite so high as Jungfrau, is really, to my eye, the more imposing object. The point to which we ascended, was probably about four thousand four hundred feet, and yet Jungfrau towered six thousand feet above us. But this was not all. There was a deep ravine between us and the great object, so that we saw Jungfrau, as it seemed, to his very base. How stupendous the object was, I will not undertake to say. The first moments of contemplating it are among the few that have brought a compensation at *the time*, for being at a distance of four thousand miles from home. But I desire you, as I have formerly, to resort to measurements for an impression. And let us take the "Great Eiger;" for, as it is one single object, and has an unbroken line of elevation

from the very base, while Jungfrau is irregular, it is to me, as I have said, the more impressive object. Besides, as you descend the Wengernalp on its eastern side, you come much nearer to a level with the base of the Great Eiger. At a certain point in the descent, I judged, from what information I could obtain, that the Great Eiger rose eight or nine thousand feet above us. That is about two miles. Now, measure off two miles upon any familiar ground around you, and suppose that by some convulsion of nature, that tract, thus laid out, were raised up into a mountain! Or, take another supposition. When I was two miles from the base of the great Eiger, and looked up at its summit, it rose half-way up the zenith. Now, when you are, sometime, two miles from the base of the Taghkannuc,* imagine its summit raised up to forty-five degrees, half-way up to the cope of heaven—or, knowing the height of Taghkannuc, pile upon it, in imagination, as many such mountains (five at least) as will make an Eiger, or a Jungfrau, and then you may get an idea, perhaps, of the sublimity of the high Alps. Possibly, indeed, you would get too great an idea of them —and if you were ever to be here, I should warn you against expecting too much. For everything is relative; and here among the Alps, everything is upon so vast a scale, that we scarcely know how to apply the ordinary measure to things.

While we were upon the Wengernalp, there were several avalanches of snow from Jungfrau. Two of them were truly very sublime. The noise exactly resembled prolonged and successive bursts of thunder. The succession is made by the descent of the mass of snow from one precipice to another. It is so completely pulverized by its fall, that it comes eventually very much to resemble a cascade of water.

As we descended the Wengernalp, the valley of Grindelwald opened to us, dotted over with cottages, cut up into small enclosures of two or three acres, and cultivated like a garden. The glaciers here disappointed me much. There is no splendour about them. An immense mass of ice, filling a deep gorge, and—instead of presenting a splendid and shining mirror of polished ice—rough, ragged, and dirty, over the whole surface—that is a glacier; at least in September—it may be, and probably is, a very different thing in the spring. The bottom of the glacier, however, where a small river makes its embouchure—makes it directly from under the ice, whose blue arches rise two hundred feet above—is worth clambering over many obstacles, at the end of a weary day, as I did, to see it. The river that issues from the glacier is almost as white as milk. It takes this appearance, doubtless, from the peculiar clayey soil of its bed.

This ended the fifteenth of September, 1833, in which I have walked over the Wengernalp, and to the glacier of Grindelwald.

We intended to continue our excursion another day among the Alps; but when we rose in the morning, the mountains had veiled their awful heads in the clouds of an autumnal storm—forbidding all further scrutiny and intrusion from us pigmy mortals. We could not complain that our career was checked; for three days—including one at Thun—"three glorious days" among the Alps, is enough to reflect upon, with pleasure and gratitude, all our lives. The storm looked too likely to con-

* In Sheffield, county of Berkshire, Massachusetts.

tinue, and it was too near the equinox to permit us to doubt; so we took a char-a-banc to Neuhaus, and came up by the lake to Thun, in six and a half hours.

On this excursion, there has been much in the apparent condition of the inhabitants to interest us. There appears to be great simplicity and innocence, and there must be great equality among them. For the cottages are all of about the same size and appearance, and each one is surrounded by a small tract of land, which, I should presume, and am told, indeed, belongs to the occupant. Meet it seems, that human distinctions should shrink to nothing at the foot of these stupendous mountains; that man should build no towers of pride beneath their mighty shadow. Indeed, it is poverty and humility that climb high here; for some of these cottages are perched upon rocks and among recesses, high and secluded enough to be the eyry of the eagle. But if the people are poor—and we were told that potatoes, milk, cheese, and butter, constituted the principal food of many—they are apparently not indigent. We met with very little begging—unless it were in the picturesque form of presenting fruit and flowers—ay, and a song, too, at times. A little girl would offer you a pretty bouquet; or a boy his dish of nuts from the mountains; and receiving a batz or two, would run away seemingly very much delighted. As we were going up the Wengernalp, a mother stood at the gate before her cottage with an infant (six months old apparently) in her arms, holding in each little hand a bouquet; and the batz, of course, could not be refused. The singing deserves a more elaborate description. Two and three, and sometimes four girls, of from twelve to sixteen years of age, would every now and then waylay us, so to call it, in the valley, or upon the mountain side, and as we approached them, would commence singing one of their national airs. This they would do with very tolerable effect, executing several parts with good keeping of the harmony, and with a very modest aspect all the while, casting their eyes upon the ground, and scarcely raising them but to courtesy thanks for the expected gift. I observed that all their songs had the peculiar chorus or close of the Swiss national air. The rapid transitions and piercing shrillness of voice, enable one to distinguish it farther than any musical note I ever heard. I have heard it from the bosom of a Swiss lake, when I was on the mountain four thousand feet above.

By the bye, the music of the Swiss cow bells must not be forgotten. It is sharp and piercing, resembling so much the clink of the hammer upon the anvil, that I thought at first there must be a blacksmith's shop among the mountains, though nothing seemed more unlikely. The cows feed on the heights of the mountains; and upon almost the highest point of the Wengernalp, we found many log cabins, called chalets, which are built chiefly for the purposes of the dairy. Large flocks of goats, too, are fed here.

What are called valleys in the Oberland—as those of Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald—are still very elevated spots; the latter three thousand one hundred and fifty feet above the lake of Thun.*

* This will account for my saying, when at an elevation of four thousand four hundred feet on the Wengernalp, that Jungfrau rose six thousand feet above us; the absolute height of Jungfrau being thirteen thousand seven hundred and twenty feet.

Upon the whole, if I were asked, on our return to Thun, what I had got, I should say that there remained upon my mind an impression of mighty things—seen briefly, seen as if they had appeared in a dream—yet of mighty things which *will* for ever remain in my mind, images of grandeur. I have seen some of the heights of the creation. Its lowly places, too, are lovely, and derive an increased beauty from the stupendous objects around them. Altogether, it is a combination full of wonders.

BERNE, *September* 18.—The ride from Thun to Berne is one of the finest in the world. I cannot make the effort to describe—having acquired a Bernese dulness, or some other dulness, whose *vis inertia* is not to be overcome. Yet, after all, the scene has not exactly those *points* of interest that stamp themselves upon the memory; and if I shall be asked a year hence, what it is in the ride from Thun to Berne that everybody admires so much, I suppose I shall answer, with a sort of rising inflection tone, "Oh! the distant hills I suppose they mean—very beautiful; and the slopes, the swells, the plains—all very graceful: fine wood, too; and queer, strange, strong, grand old houses—ay, old and new, in the Swiss fashion, you understand—but monstrous big houses; looking as if they were crammed with abundance, as if their very sides groaned with a surfeit—with roofs big enough for Noah's ark; for Noah's ark held scarcely a more complete museum and menagerie of the whole creation, than some of these substantial, strong-sided, corpulent Swiss farm-houses." Positively, they have quite broken down my rising inflection, with the description of them.

The entrance to Berne is charming; through rows of linden trees, delightful walks, and magnificent terraces, sloping up so high as to take them quite out of the dust of the road. By the windings of the Aar, Berne is made almost a peninsula, and it rises finely from the water on each side. The far-famed terraces here are indeed delightful promenades, commanding fine views of the surrounding rich country, that extend quite to the Alps. The grand terrace, back of the cathedral, is more than one hundred feet high. From this a horse once leaped, bearing his rider with him. The horse was crushed beneath his master, who escaped with life. A tablet on the parapet testifies his gratitude. The side-walks, almost all over the city, pass under arcades; the basement story of each house giving up space enough for the purpose.

This morning we went out to Hofwyl (six miles), to see Mr. Fellenberg, and his farm and school. One of the students whom he introduced to us, conducted us over the whole literary and (in-door) farming establishments. The students' room, dormitories, &c. seemed in fine order, but nothing struck me so much as the stalls—the really magnificent cows and oxen. If the intellect is nurtured as well, the establishment must be considered as giving birth to prodigies of all sorts. Fellenberg's school, you will recollect, perhaps, is the successor to Pestalozzi's at Yverdun.

NEUFCHATEL, *September* 19.—The vicinity to Berne, on the road to Neufchatel, is as magnificent as all its environs are. The road, the promenades, the avenues of trees, the groves, the woods, the whole country, with its graceful swells and swollen abundance—few things can surpass.

The route to Neufchatel is generally through a fine country; and

presents two things to remark upon, viz. some of the poorest and forlornest villages we have seen in Switzerland; they are about the head of the Lake Neufchatel—and this splendid competence, abundance, plethory, of the good things of this world, which I am so much surprised to find in so many parts of the country. I do not know about the mental condition: there is every indication that it is by no means so well as with us in America—five-sixths, however, read and write, says Mr. Fellenberg—but such farms, and such houses, all along, uninterrupted for fifty miles together, are not to be seen in *our* country, nor, I doubt, in any other.

These very farms and houses, indeed, it is to be said, full as they are of everything else, bear but slender evidence of social and intellectual improvement. Women, in great numbers, are everywhere at work in the fields, employed in the hardest, coarsest, and most offensive labours. These stupendous houses, too,—I cannot believe they would be all just alike—all built with these wide spreading, darkening roofs —all sheltering under one roof, men, women, and children, pigs, poultry, horses, oxen, cows, hay, corn, carts, carriages, and a world of things beside—unless it were that these are a people going on just as their fathers have gone on, and just as their neighbours go on, without an intelligent thought of improvement.

In coming to Neufchatel, we intended to turn aside and visit the Lake Bienne; but it rained; and rain and clouds make a dismal thing of a lake.

Yverdun (*September* 20) is at the bottom of the Lake Neufchatel. Some Roman monuments have been dug up here; and we saw a small collection behind the castle. This castle was the seat of Pestalozzi's school; a more worthy employment, certainly, of an ancient baronial residence, than that of Grandson, three miles back, which is turned into a tobacco manufactory.

This last sentence, by the bye, is a pretty large text; for, in the first place, I have to observe, apropos, that tobacco is cultivated on all the route we have taken on the Continent; and it is smoked to an enormous extent. At home, abroad, travelling, lying by, labouring, visiting, I had almost said eating, drinking, everywhere, and for ever, the people are smoking. Nothing is more common than to see young fellows on the top of a German diligence, at the stopping places, discharging the refuse cargo of ashes from pipes, which hold, I verily believe, nearly half a pint of tobacco, and then reloading, lighting, and going on their way, as if they meant to signalize their passage through the world by a trailing cloud of tobacco smoke. Verily, if the ancient heroes had been smokers at this rate, they would not have needed any protection from Venus or Juno, to screen them from observation. We have met with a great many young men, walking over Switzerland, with knapsacks on their backs, and, almost as uniformly, pipes in their hands. Indeed, the sale of pipes in the cities and villages is a considerable business. Be it observed, however, that the pipe on the Continent is a very different thing from the humble clay manufacture of our country. The bowl is made of porcelain, the stem of whalebone, one, two, or three feet long, ornamented, too, with tassels, and much wrought to give it graceful bends, &c. All this being considered, let the pain and horror be proportionably lessened, that the

Castle of Grandson, which sent forth knights to the crusades—on whose battlements brave men fought, and from whose balconies fair ladies looked forth upon the broad sheet of Neufchatel—whose last prince and possessor in the family line (Otho) was so celebrated in chivalry, that he won the affections of the fair lady of Gerard d'Estavayer, living on the opposite shore of the lake, and was by her husband slain in judicial combat in 1139—that the Castle of Grandson, I say, should be a tobacco manufactory! Better make pipes than lances; better light them, than the match for the fusee; better send up the curling, vanishing smoke—that touching emblem of the frailty of human life—than violently to destroy human life!

My second observation is, that from Castle Grandson, Charles the Bold of Burgundy went forth to the battle, in which he was first defeated by the Swiss.

This conflict of Charles with the Swiss is one which both history and romance have made interesting. As we approached that part of the country, therefore, where I knew the battle took place, I put my head out of the carriage window, and desired Auguste, the courier, to inquire about some of the neighbouring localities, Giez especially, a village which is described as near by. He asked the people in a field at work; but they seemed to know nothing about Giez. I was about sitting down in despair, when I told Auguste to ask an old man in the field, if he knew where the battle-field of Charles the Bold of Burgundy was. This seemed more intelligible. "Ici! ici!" exclaimed the old man, pointing all around him. We were quickly out of the carriage, and on the ground. What could be more fortunate for marvel-hunters? The passing plough had just laid open a grave! A little excavation had been made; and by the side of it lay a pile of human bones in the last stages of decay!

This battle was fought in 1476, more than three centuries ago; but I believe that the records of our own Indian burying grounds, show that it is not at all unlikely that human bones should be preserved in the earth, for such a length of time. I had observed, too, that Simond says that fragments of arms were still found occasionally upon this field. Here, then, before me, I could not doubt, were solemn relics of that fierce and fearful encounter. These naked, decayed, marrowless bones stood up, one day, on this very field, a living and breathing man, to breast the shock of battle—yea, stood and fought, perhaps, side by side, with Charles the Bold.

GENEVA, *September* 22.—From Yverdun, we have come here by Lausanne, and the Lake of Geneva.

At Lausanne we visited the house of Gibbon; went out upon the grounds—the fine esplanade, commanding a beautiful view of the lake, where he was accustomed to walk; visited the garden where he wrote the last sentence of his History of the Decline and Fall, and made the reflections which are recorded in his autobiography.

At Copet, a few miles from Geneva, we went up, while the horses were changing, and saw the chateau of M. Neckar, where his daughter, Madame de Stael, had lived, and which is still in a branch of the De Stael family. The grounds behind the chateau are beautiful—a delightful level spot, with winding walks, and clumps of trees and shrubbery. In a ground opposite, full of trees, is the cemetery, where sleep the re-

mains of the father and daughter, after a life, spent much of it, in the sight of Europe and the world. The ground is private, and we were not permitted to go into it. The chateau is just above the village of Copet, and commands a view of the lake.

It is a charming ride upon the lake, all the way from Lausanne (forty miles), and the appearance of the people, everywhere, and especially at Geneva, has given me more pleasure far, than anything of the kind since we came to the Continent. There is more intelligence apparent, and far more ease of condition. Women with delicate countenances, and gentlemen at leisure, are seen walking everywhere, on the beautiful promenades that skirt the lake.

The environs of Geneva are richer in scenery than those of any town I have seen, except Edinburgh. I have walked an hour or two to-day on the south side of the city. It is Sunday, and one of the loveliest days of Autumn — and though the brightness of heaven and earth is touched with the sadness which sad news bringeth—yet it is only softened and hallowed—it is bright still. I have found it good to

> "Go forth under the open sky, and list to nature's teachings;
> While from all around, earth and her waters,
> Comes a solemn voice: 'Yet a few days,
> And *thee* the all-beholding sun shall see no more,
> In all his course.'"

CHAPTER XI.

EXCURSION TO CHAMOUNI AND MONT BLANC—GENEVESE SOCIETY AND MANNERS —SCENERY OF THE LAKE OF GENEVA—TRAVELLING WITH VETTURINO— CHILLON—UPPER VALLEY OF THE RHONE—SION—THE SIMPLON ROAD— SCENERY OF THE SIMPLON—LAKE MAGGIORE—ISLANDS OF MADRE AND BELLA.

At nine o'clock, on the twenty-third of September, we left Geneva in a char-a-banc for St. Martins, on the way to Chamouni. The road is, most of the way, in a valley, and through one of these glorious mountain passes. It is much of the way by the river Arve, which, taking its origin in the Col de Balme, above Chamouni, falls into the river Rhone, just below Geneva. The valley, most of it in Savoy, is not very highly cultivated, and has not the verdure and beauty of some of the Swiss valleys. The people and their villages look miserable. This is one of the regions of the Alps where the disease named *goitre* exists. It is a large excrescence in front of the neck, appearing like a wen. It is found in females mostly, if not entirely. I did not see it but in one man. The cause of this singular disorder, affecting, except to an inconsiderable extent, no other quarter of the world, is not well settled. Some physicians ascribe it to the air, and others to the water of these regions. I could almost believe that it is sympathy that propagates it; for the sight of it has made my own neck feel strangely all day.

The mountain barriers on each side of this pass have a variety, wildness, and grandeur, not inferior, perhaps, to the valley of Lauterbrun-

nen. At Balme—where, by the bye, a diminutive piece of artillery is fired off, for a franc, that travellers may hear the echoes—are some extensive caverns, said to be interesting, but we had not time for them. There is a collection of water within (from springs, I suppose), which finds vent on the mountain side, a quarter of a mile distant, in a very pretty waterfall, eight hundred feet high. Three or four cascades, indeed, appear by the road side, in the same valley, of from five to seven hundred feet in height; but none of them have a sufficient body of water to make them anything more than *petites* curiosities.

The range of Mont Blanc had been in sight all day, its summits crowned with snow; but it was not till we approached St. Martins that Mont Blanc himself rose before us. The masses of snow appear to be larger than on Jungfrau and the Eigers. We were in time to see the last rays of the setting sun fade away upon the pinnacle, nearly an hour after he had set to us in the valley.

On the twenty-fourth, we left St. Martins at six o'clock, for Prieuré in the valley of Chamouni. The pass up into the valley has all the wildness that I expected to see in Switzerland; a tremendous gorge, through which the Arve tumbled and roared, sometimes five hundred feet almost in a perpendicular descent beneath us; stupendous rocks and mighty fragments of mountains, looking as if they were hurled down by the hand of an earthquake; the thick clothing of fir trees, whose foliage scarcely relieves the rugged features of rock and precipice, while it lends to everything a character more sombre and stern; the deep shadows of the early morning lying upon some parts, and its brightest splendours falling upon others—these are the things that might be brought into a picture, but I have no time to draw a picture.

The valley of Chamouni certainly has disappointed me, and I wonder that some traveller could not have said that it is, in itself, nothing very remarkable. Chamouni—Chamouni—we have heard of it so long and so much, and the word, too, sounds so sweetly, that we naturally expect something extraordinary. Yet, in truth, it is quite inferior to Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald, which, as valleys, we scarcely ever hear named.

We arrived at Prieuré at half-past ten o'clock in the morning, and immediately prepared to ascend to some point of the surrounding mountains, from which to see, to the best advantage, Mont Blanc and the Mer de Glace—the largest of the glaciers. We chose Mont Flégère; and ascended to a point, probably three or four thousand feet high. From this point, not only are Mont Blanc and the neighbouring pinnacles well seen, but a number of glaciers, fourteen in all, it is said, are in view. And now, if I could say that these glaciers were stupendous mirrors, in which the mountains are reflected, it would doubtless be presenting a picture of unequalled splendour and sublimity. But alas! nothing could be farther from the truth. A glacier resembles anything but a mirror. Its surface is rough, ridged, and covered with rocks, stones, and dirt. This, at least, is the appearance in autumn. The finest thing about the glaciers—unless it be the stupendous mass crowding down into the verdant valley—is the shooting up of the ice into innumerable pyramids and pinnacles; and this appearance is most beautiful, not in the Mer de Glace, but in the Glacier de Boisson, lying west of it.

But if the glaciers disappointed us, Mont Blanc, with his attendant pinnacles, shooting up into the clear sky, one of them, a single cone rising, I should think, from its base three thousand feet—Mont Blanc, too, with his vastness of breadth and grandeur of elevation, eleven thousand seven hundred and fifty feet* from the valley of Chamouni, and with the radiant fields of snow upon his head, could not well be said to disappoint expectation. Nevertheless, and after all, Jungfrau and the Great Eiger struck me more.

Mr. Simond says, referring to the weather, that "Alp hunting, like other hunting, is occasionally subject to disappointments." The remark, surely, has had no application to us on this excursion. On the twenty-fourth, particularly, we had such a sky as I have not seen before in Europe, as I never saw surpassed in America, nor do I look for anything more glorious in Italy. Such splendid transparency, such awful serenity, such unfathomable depths of ether, such heavens indescribable, seem to me the fit element in which sublime mountain heights should appear, to give the fullest and fittest impression. The evening, too, spread the light of a full moon upon the mountains; and here were all objects—snowy peak, bare, sharp pinnacle, the deep gorge, the dark fir grove, the bristling glacier, the embosomed valley—everything of majestic scenery, that could make such a night fit close to such a day. Surely, no fire from heaven, nor altars built with hands, could be needed by him who came to worship here. It was one of those seasons of life, when you are silent all the day long, and can scarcely sleep at night, from the burden and pressure of thoughts that can find neither utterance nor repose.

On the morning of the twenty-fifth we left Chamouni, on our return to Geneva. Perhaps it would not be possible that any contrasts in light and shade should surpass those which were presented in the panorama of mountains that we left behind us. In the distance, lay the snowy range of Mont Blanc, beneath the dazzling splendours of the morning, and there was brightness; nearer and on the left lay mountains covered with firs, which the morning ray had not touched, and there was darkness; on the right were hills, partly cultivated, partly wooded, on which streamed the rich light of early day, and there was beauty.

It is not strange, perhaps, but it is a curious fact, that this secluded and delightful spot was, ages ago, the resort of Roman refugees from the persecutions of the state. In and about Passy, a village in the valley below Chamouni, have been found votive altars, with inscriptions, and ruins of villas, showing that it was a place of residence as well as retreat.

On the evening of the twenty-fifth, we returned to Geneva, well tired, but well satisfied, and here we have taken up our abode for a few days.

My chamber at the Hotel de l'Ecu de Geneve, looks out upon the Lake of Geneva, and upon the "arrowy Rhone," as it darts forth from the full and placid bosom of waters that pour themselves out into this —shall I not say—most beautiful of all rivers. I do not mean its banks, on which I have not been; but the stream itself, broad, deep, and so clear, that every pebble is seen upon the bottom, and rushing forth a stream of emerald, at the rate of six or seven miles an hour.

* Fourteen thousand seven hundred and fifty feet above the sea.

The lake, indeed, though fifty miles long, and ten broad, is in a sort, like many of the lakes in Switzerland, but an expansion of the river; the Rhone watering a rich and extensive country before it enters the lake. What gives the peculiar green colour to the lakes and rivers which are fed by the high Alps, I do not know; but I think it must be something in the bosom of the mountains, some ore or earth—since I have observed it in many of the streams, very high up towards their sources, and especially in those that issue from the glaciers. For although these streams last mentioned have a milky appearance, as I have somewhere said, yet they are also distinctly tinged with green.

As we are passing a week here, my notes will adventure a step further than is usual into society.

We called yesterday upon M. Sismondi, introduced by a letter from Dr. Channing. Madame Sismondi was very ill, and we saw the celebrated historian of politics and literature but half an hour. What services our friends do us, without intending it! A miniature likeness of Miss Sedgwick, with her own autograph beneath it, hung upon the wall. It was a voice, in a far land, from my own Berkshire home. M. Sismondi is extremely interesting both in person and conversation—in both, full of dignity, intelligence, and graceful ease and kindness. I was much struck with an observation of his upon the effects of the Catholic and Protestant religions. Joining his hands together, and interlacing his fingers, he said, "There are cantons of Switzerland interlocked in this manner, and when the road carries you across the points of intersection, you might know in the darkest night, by the state of the roads, by the very smell of the country, which is Catholic and which is Protestant."

Afterward we went to see the collections, in natural history, of M. de Luc. Those things always weary me; but so did not the man. How rare it is to find such a person in America—surrounded by bones and fossils, stuffed animals and birds, skeletons and shells! By the bye, the collections of our friends in New Bedford could help him much, in the department of conchology; but then theirs are in elegant cabinets, and have not the learned dust upon them.

M. de Luc has a great horror of priestly domination, and gave us this pretty extraordinary fact. In St. Jervais, not far hence up among the mountains (of Savoy, I think), is a bathing establishment, for the use of mineral waters. The keeper of the house had collected for the entertainment of his visiters a miscellaneous library of about a thousand volumes. Last summer, in his absence, two Jesuit priests visited the establishment, looked over the library, took almost the entire body of it, and burned it on the spot.

September 30.—We have made some very delightful visits here, to the *pasteurs*, and one to Dr. Coindet, a very interesting old physician. Dr. C. has a great number of autographs of celebrated men; one of Francis I. one of Louis IX.—think of it!—also of Miraboau, Carnot, Robespierre; of John Calvin, too, and some letters of Rousseau. I read a few of these letters, and found them to contain some of those extraordinary declarations which he was wont to make, about the Scriptures. One of them to M. Vernes, pasteur of Geneva, says, "I believe in the Gospel. It is the most interesting of all writings. When all other books weary me, I turn to it with ever-fresh delight. When

the miseries of life press upon me, I resort to it for consolation." Dr. C. gave us his opinion, that goitre and cretinism, those shocking diseases of some portions of the Alps—the first consisting of swellings in the neck, and the last of the whole body—were owing to the water of the country; and says that the cure of them, as well as of most scrofulous disorders, is *iodine*.

We have dined very pleasantly with considerable parties at M. Neville's and M. Cheneviere's, pasteurs of Geneva. Cheneviere, you know, is considered as very pre-eminent here, if not at the head of the pasteurs; but it is not easy nor agreeable to speak of distinctions, where such men are to be found as Munier and Cellerier.

I wish you could see something of these French manners. They are so easy, so amiable, so affectionate; so entirely free from all formality and affectation. The master and mistress are not stationed in one spot, nor do they receive company with a stiff bow or courtesy; nor at dinner are they fixtures at the table, nailed down to their chairs. For instance, M——, seeing that bread is wanted, gets up and passes it around the table himself. And this not because he wants servants; but neither of the servants at the moment happened to be present. Those awkward appendages which we *wear*—shoulders, arms, hands, legs—they seem to use as part of themselves—they seem to have no consciousness of them, any more than they have of their lungs.

I wish you could have seen the manner in which Madame —— and Madame —— met; the kiss and the kiss again, as if the first was not enough to satisfy the heart; and the thousand little tendernesses of behaviour that passed during the evening. I wish, too, that you could see the manners of all these people towards us, strangers as we are. They take the heart by a *coup de*—what shall I say?—*d'œil, de main, de*—everything that is irresistible. It is affection—simple, self-forgetting, all-conquering affection. When shall we see such manners in America? When shall kindness—confiding, free, overflowing—disembarrass, unchain, disenchant society among us, from reserve, awkwardness, and suffering?

October 1.—To-day an entire change has taken place in our plans, in consequence of intelligence received of the illness of Mr. ——'s son in London. My companions will return to London, and I shall proceed to Italy alone.

The sympathy of our Genevese friends for Mr. ——, is a most delightful expression of their character. All of them look and speak as if they made the disappointment and the anxiety their own. M. ——, a fine-looking youth among the pasteurs, came in, and when he took leave of Mr. ——, said, "I hope—your son—" and then, his knowledge of English failing—what do you think he did? Why, he just put his face to Mr. ——'s, and kissed his cheek. That was the way he eked out the sentence; and it was so simple, so natural, so entirely the impulse of the heart, that it was beautiful. It was very touching; perhaps it might be said it was too much so. But I think, in the ordinary intercourse of life, that it is the artificial, affected, overstrained expression of feeling that we dislike. I allow that there are extraordinary exigences where the truest strength and delicacy of feeling are shown in self-restraint, or the restraint, rather, of expression. But this was not such a case, and the act was very simple, and not very exciting.

The Genevese institutions form a very interesting subject of inquiry. I must note some particulars without being able to expand them. The government, you know, is republican; the officers are a body of magistrates. Legislation is shared by a House of Deputies, consisting of two hundred and fifty members, who choose a Council of State, which chooses four Syndics. The qualification for voting is *birth* in the canton, and a condition above service — or else, for foreigners, a *purchase* of the privilege; and it costs, according to the means of the purchaser, fifty guineas and upward. The city has thirty thousand inhabitants; the whole canton, sixty thousand.

There is an established religion here of very moderate creed, mild discipline, and simple forms. There are four very large churches, for fifteen parishes, in which fifteen pasteurs officiate in turn — *i. e.* in the churches—while each one has a particular parish for his charge. They preach once in two or three weeks, and their salaries are proportionate—from fifty to one hundred pounds sterling. In addition to this, the pasteurs are almost all teachers of youth, professors in the Academy of Geneva, instructers in families, &c.

The children of Geneva are mainly educated alike. Madame C—— told me that the daughters of the poorest man in Geneva are as thoroughly educated as her own. And this is always done at home, and principally by the mother. The boys are sent to the academy, and carried up in it, to the completion of a finished and even professional education.

The system of religious instruction for the youth here, by the pasteurs, seems to be most admirable. Children are taken at an early age, and regularly carried up through regular courses of religious instruction, admonition, and laborious effort, to give them right impressions, till they are brought to the communion. The consequence is, that almost every adult person, of any respectability, connected with the national church, is a professor of religion.

For further accounts of Geneva, I refer you to the last part of Simond's second volume on Switzerland. I am told here by those who were his particular friends, that his accounts, especially of Genevese society, may be relied on; the rather as Madame Simond was a lady of this city.

I should think the danger here would be that of contraction — for Geneva is a world by itself, and a small world. But I saw nothing to justify the apprehension. And I am sure that I have no desire to make abatements from the most favourable account. The manner in which I have been received and treated, and the delightful adieus with which I have been dismissed, have left an impression upon my mind never to be effaced.

Lausanne, *October* 2.—To-day I have come from Geneva, on the way to Milan. It has been a fine day for a ride along the lake. Lord Byron has justly addressed it by the epithets, "clear, placid Leman!" It has been so clear and calm to-day, that not only the clouds and mountains, but every swell and seam of the mountain's side, and every hue of sky and cloud, has been perfectly reflected. Can it be that the enjoyment of nature — the *highest* enjoyment of it, is selfish? I have often asked myself the question; for in such states of mind, I always desire to be, if not alone, yet silent and undisturbed. I say to the

question—surely not selfish, most entirely the reverse. But I am inclined to think that the deepest communion with nature, implies a feeling for the time so profound, and absorbing too, that it can bear no jar, nor diversion from its object. It is as when you listen to the highest music, or eloquence, you cannnot bear a movement or a whisper that disturbs your attention.

The views of the lake and mountains in and about Lausanne are uncommonly fine. When we arrived at the hotel, the landlord, as if he knew what I wanted, said, "I will give you a room where you can see the lake." I took my station by the open window, and desired tea to be brought me there, that I might lose none of the flitting shadows and changing colours that were passing in succession over the bosom of the waters. And I scarcely remember to have seen as many varieties of hue and shade as passed here in the half hour after the sun went down behind a dark cloud in the west.

How little of that which is within, and sometimes "most within" us, ever finds expression in any words or writings! If I were to tell, here upon this open page, what my thoughts were as I gazed upon the expanse of waters, and upon the dark mountains beyond, while the veils of the waning twilight fell slowly over the sky and the stars looked forth upon the scene, as if they had been living witnesses—I should feel as if it were like praying "at the corners of the streets."

Martigny, *October* 3 —This town is in the canton of Valais, and up the valley of the Rhone, *i. e.* from the Lake of Geneva, eight hours' ride, with vetturino.

As I have mentioned this mode of conveyance, and am myself using it from Geneva to Milan, I will say a word further about it. Vetturino is a long word, and a foreign word, and sounds as if it might describe something quite respectable. Moreover, the phrase, "with vetturino," describes a mode of travelling in *Italy*. He who has travelled with vetturino has been in the enchanted land. So the word has always stood in my mind for something very romantic and *recherché*. But nothing could be less so in fact. The vehicle is as good as a third-rate stage coach, and no better. It is drawn by two horses, without relays, and travels but thirty miles a day. However, it is a good way enough for seeing the country, which the diligence and the mail coach are not, as they travel all night. And besides, you may lay aside all care,* for you may engage with your vetturino (*i. e.* the driver), to take you, say from Geneva to Milan, for a gross sum—(six napoleons, twenty-four dollars) —he carrying you, taking care of your baggage, providing and paying for your meals and lodging, and setting you down at Milan, in six days and a half. But enough of vetturini—who, by the bye, are a set of fellows that will probably cheat you if they can, in the bargain—(mine *asked* twice as much as he took)—who are so civil before setting out, that they will pull off their hat in the street, if they chance to see you in the fourth story of your hotel, but who, if you stay a moment too long to look at a waterfall or a chateau, will be murmuring "Sacre! diable!" under their breath, as if the natural play of their lungs was a sort of cursing; and who would probably foam at the mouth, if the

* That depends, I found afterward, on the character of the vetturino, and the traveller had better look after his baggage.

bonne main should prove less than they expected. I say the bonne main, *i.e.* the civility money, or the money for civility—for be it observed, that no bargain for anything to be done for you, in Europe, was ever final. There are always appendages upon appendages. You hire a conveyance to a certain place. Well, you pay, of course, for the vehicle and the horses, and for being driven—that you expected. But that is not all. You pay the postillion on his own account; and you pay him something more because he has driven you well, *i. e.* has not broken your neck; and you pay him that he may be further civil to you, by drinking your health; and you pay the tolls at the gates; and you pay a man who opens the door of your carriage, if he can find any apology for doing it; and you pay a boy who put the shoe under the wheel at the top of a hill; and you pay as many beggars as you please, for their good wishes—their "Bon voyage!" or their "Lord bless your honour!"

The head of the Lake of Geneva, which I passed around this morning, is more picturesque than the lower part about the city of Geneva. The mountains are rugged and wild; the soft and dark shadowing of the morning upon them, made them appear so much like masses of clouds in the horizon, that it was difficult at times to resist the impression; the slight haze of autumn upon them, gave a singular distinctness and delineation to the sun's rays as they streamed in through the cragged pinnacles and deep defiles; and the reflection of all this scenery in the darkened mirror of waters was so distinct, that it seemed as if the world depicted below, were not the counterpart of that above, but the very reality. Really I do not attempt to describe, as thinking I shall convey any clear impression to you, but to assist my own recollection. But truly, what a thing—what an element is *water*—and what scene can be complete, or anything near complete, without it? What images of repose and purity are like its stillness and its transparent depth; and what life is there, in all nature, like that which goes forth upon its touched and tremulous bosom? But the waters and the mountains are not the only things: for the shore also, about the head of the lake, is full of wild and romantic scenery.

I visited, in passing, the Castle of Chillon, most beautifully situated on this shore, near Villeneuve. It has deep dungeons, into which we looked from above. We went into that where Bonnivard, the Geneveso advocate of freedom, was confined by the Duke of Savoy for six years, and saw the ring in the stone pillar which held the prisoner's chain, and the place worn in the stone by the ring, as he passed to and fro, in his confined walk. Lord Byron has celebrated him. We saw the name of Byron carved on one of the neighbouring pillars. I asked the guide "Who did it?" She said, "Himself."

The valley of the Rhone, for some miles above the lake, is one of the most delightful I have seen in Switzerland; and farther up towards Martigny, though the valley itself is less interesting, and the horrors of cretinism begin to appear, yet the "munitions of rocks," the mountain barriers, are very grand and stupendous; rising sometimes perpendicularly from the road, two or three thousand feet, and cutting the sky, so that it has the singular appearance of a single quarter of a hollow sphere. Near Martigny is a very beautiful waterfall,* with much the largest column

* Pissevache, two hundred and eighty feet, says Ebel.

of water that I have seen in any of these cascades among the mountains.

Speaking of horrors—I was considerably moved for some moments, to-day, with "the horrors of the last," as I took my last look of the beautiful Lake of Geneva; but I must confess that I was soon comforted with the reflection, that it was *seen*—that the object was accomplished—that there was so much more done and finished—so much less to do. A miserable state of mind, perhaps, with which to go through Europe; nevertheless, it is mine.

October 4.—I am for the night at—I know not, and I care not, what miserable little village, on the way to the Simplon. The valley of the Rhone above Martigny grows narrow, barren, and desolate; the mountains are so bald and bleak, that I am almost tired of mountains; and the signs of poverty, and the horrors of cretinism, multiply upon us. These horrors, and almost all others, are consummated at Sion, a small town upon the Rhone. It is surrounded by walls, with towers; was formerly a Roman station; has a cathedral, and is the residence of a bishop; and is still more notable for the ruins of three old castles, situated on the rocky heights to the northeast of it. I had an hour and a half of leisure here, and spent it in walking about. I did indeed "walk about Sion, and told the towers thereof," but surely with no feelings akin to the admiration challenged for Jerusalem, the beauty of the earth. If the Romans ploughed up the foundations of the holy place, they have left foundations here to worse desecration: massive walls of houses, that look as if they might have stood since the masters of the world reigned here, and old gateways, fit to have been the entrances to courtyards and palaces—but the streets are bemired with filth, and the gateways lead to stables. But the chief horrors of this place, and indeed of the whole upper valley, are goitre and cretinism. The former I have spoken of, but it exists here in more shocking forms; and half of the female population are afflicted with it. The *cretin* is swollen in the whole body—dwarfed in stature usually—crippled in the limbs—idiotic in countenance—the eyes near together—the mouth large—the being, in fine, coming nearer to an animal than anything I ever saw in human shape. In short, there is a mass of population in this upper valley, the sight of which would be enough to make the fairest scene in the whole world painful to look upon and hateful to remember.

As we came up the valley, we passed by the gorge that leads up to the baths of Leuk, or Loueche, and to Mount Gemmi. The ascent looked frightfully inviting; and, indeed, this is the only further excursion in Switzerland that I had a special desire to make; but I must pass it by.

Simplon, *October* 5.—The Simplon road is a wonderful work, but I am too uncomfortable to write much about it. It is very cold up here, though it was hot enough at the foot of the mountain, and—I was just going to say that I could have no fire in my chamber because the chimney would smoke; when in comes *ma bonne*, the fille de chambre, and says it is all a mistake, and sets to making things comfortable. So now, what a flood will be poured out upon you, from this thaw of my room, my heart, and my fingers, you can no more tell, than these Swiss peasants, what streams will come down their mountains in spring.

I was going to say some dismal word or two about this village of Simplon, and the hotel—an hour's ride from the top of the mountain on the side of Italy; but really this fire waxes warm, and I have not a heart for it. As to the cold, we have been riding for some hours amid snowy peaks, on some of which the snow was descending, while the vapour that curled around others looked cold, and chilly, and benumbed—altogether making an appearance enough in unison with the state of the atmosphere, and sufficient to account for it. I wonder the trees *grow* here; but they do grow—the hemlocks, larches, and firs fill the defiles and gorges along which the Simplon road comes, and obstinately push far up the mountain precipices and peaks; yes, and men grow here, and clamber and cling wherever (I had almost said) the chamois can leap, or the eagle fly; they grow, and their houses grow, and multiply, on steep declivities to which one would think they could hardly hold on, and seemingly inaccessible patches, where, the wonder is, that they ever got, or getting, ever find their way back to the world. Yet so they live—a hardy race, and, I believe, simple and innocent. I could not help breathing my blessing upon them, as I fixed my eye for some moments upon the last green spot of Switzerland about Brieg—and mingling prayers for them with my regrets that I shall probably never see Swiss valley or mountain more.

The Simplon road is everywhere an easy ascent, cut out with immense labour and expense from the side of the mountain, and sometimes passing, by what are called galleries, through the very brow of the mountain. Along the summit are nine houses of refuge, substantially built, and occupied for the purpose of providing shelter and relief for travellers, in the storms that, of course, in winter, rage here with great violence. In addition to this provision, an immensely large convent is erected for the residence of monks, who are to consider themselves as pledged to these offices of mercy. It is a problem worthy of attention, why the Roman Catholic religion furnishes more examples of *extraordinary* exertions and sacrifices, than any other form of Christianity. It is a problem; but I cannot discuss it here, on the top of the mountains. I may find time and inclination on some journalizing day, to enter into a discussion of this and other moral claims of the Roman Catholic system.

Bavena, on Lake Maggiore, *October* 6.—I feel that I am approaching the mighty land, the Ultima Thule of my pilgrimage; I am on the south side of the Alps—but to turn back to the route.

I thought it quite unfortunate as I rose this morning, that the day was overcast with clouds, and threatened rain; but the bright, fantastic mists that floated around the tops of the mountains soon presented aspects that afforded compensation for the want of a clear sky. Indeed, I had not seen the Alps before, under these aspects; for at Grindelwald it was a close and heavy veil that settled down upon them. But here nothing could be more light and airy. There was no wind sensible to us below, and it seemed as if the mist were moved by some power within itself. Now it sailed along with a majestic sweep around the mountain's brow; then it plunged down into some profound abyss, as if, like the furies, it bore a victim to the dark prison below; and again it rose up, disclosing, but shadowing, the awful depths—as it were the foundations of the world. Other clouds floated along the mountain

sides, attracting, repelling, passing and repassing, mingling and parting, like the skirmishing forces of an army; and sometimes meeting, they held a momentary conflict, and then mounting up, carried the aerial war into the region of clouds—unveiling, at the same time, some stupendous precipice, dark and awful, as if it had been blasted and blackened by the thunder of heaven.

But it is useless to try to describe, and I wonder that I renew my efforts and failures. Let us come to the road; it is terra firma, and it can be measured—and yet not exactly described neither. It is fourteen or fifteen leagues long (*i. e.* thirty or forty miles) and twenty-five feet broad, and descends generally about six or seven feet in a hundred; and was made in four years (having been commenced in 1801), and employed three thousand men, and required one hundred and fifty thousand quintals of powder for blasting, and cost, I know not how much—I have heard it said to be eight millions of crowns—and finally the expense was borne jointly by Bonaparte and the Italian states. So that it is Bonaparte's road only as he projected it, and by his energy and influence caused it to be carried through. The road this side of the mountain is, in the engineering required and the scenery displayed, far more striking than that on the side of Switzerland. It passes by, and under, and through the most tremendous precipices, among roaring cascades, and over ravines and gorges that seem unfathomable; the passage is one of such horrors as I have not seen anywhere else in Switzerland; the vistas, the depths, the heights—everything above, beneath, before, behind, and around you, is marked with stupendous and awful grandeur; the rocks that lie around you, and which have fallen from the precipices, leave all others to be stones or pebbles in the comparison—and yet you are carried along this road, and through all these objects so sublime, and almost frightful—carried as easily and smoothly as if you were taking an airing in the Regent's Park. The passage is completed at the grand bridge of Crevola, where you enter one of the beautiful valleys of Piedmont, and through it come down to the Lake Maggiore.

It is singular, but the moment you reach the vineyards, on the south side of the Alps, you find a totally different style of cultivation. On the north side, and indeed all along up the Rhone, vineyards look precisely like nurseries—nurseries, say, of maple trees, for that is the shape of the leaf—about three or four feet high; and nothing, certainly, can be less picturesque than such a vineyard. But here the vines run upon frames, with green grass beneath, and present the appearance of a whole country of arbours. It is, of course, far more beautiful. By the bye, the only tolerable grapes I have tasted since I came to the Continent, I bought yesterday, in coming up the Simplon. They have been, with other fruit, upon our table every day, and every day I have tasted of them, and that is all. Indeed, the ripening season has been very cold, and unfavourable for all fruit. Yet so impossible do these people think it to make a dinner without fruit, that if they raised nothing but apples of Sodom, I believe they would make you up a dessert of them.

On the seventh, before sunrise, I was on Lake Maggiore, with two chance fellow-travellers, to visit the islands of Madre and Bella. The first is laid out as a garden and pleasure ground, and is with the views

from it—openings to which are left through the trees—very picturesque. Yet a neighbouring mountain, clothed with heaven's beauty—the air—was more than all that the art of man can do.

His art, by the bye, has been very poorly exerted on Bella—in the person of the Borromean family, to whom this lake, and an extensive country about it belongs—for Bella (the beautiful) is made by terraces, rising one above another, and lessening towards the top, to look very much like a Chinese pagoda. We went over the palace, which is filled with paintings that seemed to me, with the exception of a Cleopatra, miserable. But there was one thing that really made the spot worth visiting; and that was the basement story, consisting of a very extensive suite of rooms, finished in the grotto style—a sort of mosaic work in pebbles and shells, covering the floors and ceilings, and sides indeed, except where a slab of marble was here and there inlaid. These apartments open by window-doors, upon the very water of the lake, inviting every breath of air, and with seats around, looked as if they might be the very retreats of pleasure, in a warm climate.

CHAPTER XII.

LAKE MAGGIORE — MILAN — CATHEDRAL OF MILAN — ITALIAN SKY — PUBLIC GROUNDS AND PROMENADES IN THE CITIES AND VILLAGES OF THE CONTINENT — PLAINS OF LOMBARDY — PARMA — SABBATH SCENES — MUSIC — BOLOGNA — COVIGLIAJO.

Sesto, *October* 7.—It was not till I got to the lower or south end Lake Maggiore, and fairly out of the mountain region, that I began to feel as if I were in Italy. I could not help thinking it was a specimen we had, as we passed over the Ticino, just after it issues from the lake, to Sesto. The boat was as clumsy and crazy a thing as if steamboats had never been heard of; consisting, indeed, of two boats lashed together, and drawn over by pulling upon a rope stretched and fastened from bank to bank. This was one part of the specimen. For the other—when we had got under way, out stepped a fiddler, and, after twanging his instrument a little, sung and played several airs with great apparent enthusiasm. It was a very agreeable, and even touching welcome to the land of song—ay, and of poverty, too; for this was a method of gaining a livelihood, and, I thought, a very ingenious one; for the music you *must have;* and I never knew anybody to refuse to pay for an offered treat of this kind But alas! how I have fallen away from the romance of the thing!

Not far from Sesto, we passed through the village of Soma, in, or near which, is thought to have been the battle ground of the conflict between Hannibal and Scipio.* In the village stands an immensely large and evidently very ancient cypress, which tradition indeed would make almost old enough to have seen the battle. Take your map, and

* This was Hannibal's first battle in Italy; his second was with Sempronius near Plauntia; his third with Flaminius on Lake Thrasymene; his fourth with Varro, at Cannæ.

I will point out to you Hannibal's route into Italy; at least so M. De Luc, of Geneva, who has written a book on the subject, showed it to me. Up the Rhone, then, to Vienne, a small town a little below Lyons. Then he struck for the Alps, which he passed by Mont St. Bernard. He reached Aosta, and penetrated, I believe, something farther into Italy; when finding that Turin would not submit to him, and unwilling to leave an enemy behind, he turned back to subdue that city. He then advanced again, and met Scipio, it is said, near Oleggio—near to which town is Soma.

Milan, *October* 8.—The route from Lake Maggiore to Milan is not interesting; unless fields of Indian corn, and vineyards, and mulberry trees, and the chestnut, and hedges of acacia, ought to make it so.

The approach to Milan, through a vista of fine linden trees which Napoleon caused to be planted, is very fine; and the entrance is to be, when it is finished, through a magnificent marble arch, commenced by Bonaparte, in commemoration of the great Simplon road, which is considered as terminating here.

The priest and the soldier are seen here at every corner—the former with a three-cornered, cocked-up hat, and a kind of cassock, or black surtout; the latter in a white costume. They represent, indeed, the twofold despotism under which Italy is suffering. The priests are Italian, it is true, but the military are almost exclusively Austrian. Those, however, who wish to throw off the yoke, seem quite as much to fear the former as the latter—for all their secrets are constantly liable to be betrayed to the priests, in the confessional. A man's foes, indeed, become those of his own household—his wife, daughter, or sister.

Scenes in Milan.—(I cannot describe at length, but will just hint at them.) Into the hollow square or court-yard of the grand Hotel de Ville, on which my chamber window looks, drives a splendid carriage, containing a lady (a Russian countess) and little girl, three dogs, and on the seats (behind and before), three servants. The lady gets out, the dogs follow; but are soon caught by the servants, caressed, and put back again. The principal servant is dressed à la mode militaire, more splendidly than any general officer I ever saw on a review day, in our own country. The said servant comes up to the carriage, calls the dogs to him, and kisses them—dogs and man, chops to chops—par nobile fratrum. Another—in the same court under my window, in which the *canaille* figure. Three postilions are scolding in Italian, about some matter in dispute, I know not what. And truly, I never heard a language for scolding like this Italian. It can be spoken, I think, more rapidly than any other, and there is something so decided and manly in the tones of it—far more than in the French or English. The three postilions, for about five minutes, talked all together, and all gestured as if their arms must have had steel fibres, and their lungs were as much more energetic than any other human lungs, as Perkin's steam guns, discharging a thousand balls in a minute, are beyond all other guns. Oh! hear an Italian scold, if you would know what scolding may be. One of *our* people, upon a thousandth part of the apparent provocation, would have silently knocked his fellow down. The English canaille, too, make a great noise in their quarrels, with as little result; but their noise, compared with the

Italian, is as a heavy lumbering coach, compared with the most active and energetic steam carriage. Then, as to talking in general—surely it is this people's meat and drink. This house is a perfect Babel. Such a racket of voices as comes from the court, the stairways, and passages, all the day long and all the evening, I never heard before. Our American intercourse is absolute silence, compared with it. Once more to mount up again into the higher regions: a carriage is approaching the palace of the vice king—(the brother of the emperor of Austria)—immediately the word is passed along the line of soldiery, stationed in front of the palace; they get under arms; the drums beat; the officers in attendance take off their hats and bow low; I look to see *who it is* in the carriage that makes this sensation; and I discover, on the back seat of this stately carriage, *three little boys!* The streets—they are full of people; they are full of talk and laughter; they are full of London-like cries; they are full of carriages, with fine horses; the priests, in solemn robes, sweep by at every moment: the dashing soldiers are continually passing and repassing; females, of good person, many of them wearing veils on their heads instead of bonnets, many wearing nothing, are constantly promenading, as if they had nothing else to do; but as many more are attending at the counters of the shops; and the toil of men, with the hammer, and the saw, and the lathe, and the silk spinning or weaving, breaks upon the ear from all quarters; the church bells are perpetually ringing, as if every day were a Sabbath, and votaries are passing in and out of the temples; the city seems to be full of immense palaces, built around hollow squares, and some of them with curtained balconies in front. One would think, from looking at the *outside* of things, that there must be great wealth here, and great happiness.

I attended service yesterday in the cathedral. Was it not a glorious thing, amid that rich but dim light, streaming through painted windows—amid those stately marble columns, and beneath those majestic arches and sculptured ceilings—with the notes of the pealing organ, and incense, flung from many censers to bear the soul up to heaven—was it not a glorious thing to worship there? I did so, and did not desire to doubt that many others did.

This cathedral is of white marble, four hundred and forty-five feet long, two hundred and eighty-nine broad at the transept, three hundred and fifty-six in height—to the top of the spire, that is—supported by one hundred and sixty columns, seventy-seven feet high, floored with tessellated marble, and has, in and about it, including figures in bas relief, four thousand five hundred marble statues. And yet—what is this mysterious principle of proportion?—the sight of it does not swell the heart—not mine at least—with such admiration as the simple, glorious York minster. It is too broad for the height. And then, although built of marble, the walls are sadly weather-stained, so as to be scarcely more beautiful than the coarse stone of England. Its hundred pinnacles, indeed—each one crowned with a statue, standing out in the bright sky, and kept perfectly white by the action of the pure elements—are a glorious vision.

And amid what a sky were they lifted up yesterday! Where were there ever such depths of splendour in any heaven, as in this of Italy! This is the peculiarity. Not that the colour is richer than I have seen

in America; but that there is a certain splendour with the colouring, a transparency of ether, an illumination opening into the depths profound, that makes the Italian sky—unexpectedly to me, I confess—a wonder and a beauty unequalled, as it is inexpressible. On this point I suppose there could not be a more unprejudiced witness. When I came to see the English sky, I thought it very likely that the enthusiastic admiration of the Italian, which we hear so much about, was English. So much had I persuaded myself of this, that I had ceased to expect anything extraordinary. I was not thinking of anything of the sort, when looking up at the cathedral yesterday, my attention was drawn to those heavens inexpressible, that rose above it; and for an hour or two I saw nothing, thought of nothing else. It was not easy to discriminate; for my emotions came upon me like a deluge. Yet, remembering my previous scepticism, I did not attempt to inquire, what it was that so moved and entranced me. And I say again, that the peculiarity of the Italian sky does not consist in its colour, not certainly as compared with that of America, though to the English it may be the most striking point of difference. Nor was it transparency exactly—at least, not that transparency by which distant objects are more distinctly seen. This is what I have heard said, and it is true that objects are so seen. If you cast your eye to the heavens in the quarter opposite the sun, at ten or eleven o'clock in the morning, though nothing is relieved against it, but the most common range of buildings in the street, the definite character of the object, the indentation, as it were, upon the very sky, is something so striking, that you can hardly help pausing in your walk to survey it. But this, after all, is not to me the special and soul-entrancing beauty. It is that transparency, rather, by which you seem to look *into* the heavens. The sky does not seem to be a mere concave, a sphere; it does not seem to bound your thought, scarcely your vision, but carries them away to illimitable depths, opening to heavens beyond. Was it not something indicative of this peculiarity, that I saw the faint crescent of the waning moon this morning, high up in the sky, almost till mid-day?

By the bye, speaking of the moon, I have been almost up to it to-day, in ascending the spire of the cathedral. It presents a magnificent view, stretching from the Alps to the Apennines.

October 11.—Having the day upon my hands, I determined to be my own guide in a stroll through the city. So providing myself with the few Italian phrases necessary to inquire out the places I wished to see, though many of the people understand a question in French, I set forth. My first object was to see the sixteen pillars that remain of the temple of Hercules, built by Maximin; and I soon found the Colonnade, a venerable ruin, nearly sixteen hundred years old, consisting of Corinthian columns of marble. The tooth of time has eaten deeply into some of them, and it has been necessary to strengthen them with bands of iron. I next went to the church of S. Maria de Graces, in the sacristy of which is the fresco painting of the Last Supper*—the original of the many paintings and engravings which are so familiarly known, spread as they are through the world. The painting is much defaced, and in many places retouched; but it is far more striking still than the copies,

* That by Leonardo da Vinci.

and must originally have been very powerful. The countenance of our Saviour has in it a very affecting union of dignity, meekness, and sorrow.

I turned next toward the western part of the city, where is the Champ de Mars, and a fine promenade with avenues of trees adjoining. These delightful retreats, found in almost all the cities and villages of Europe, deserve more consideration than they have yet received with us. In the original laying out of a city or village, the expense would be almost nothing; and even at a later period it may be a very narrow economy which alleges that it cannot be afforded. The account would probably be more than settled by the diminished bills of the doctor. When it was proposed in parliament to sell some of the parks in the vicinity of London, Burke, in his speech against the measure, called the parks "the lungs of the metropolis." That single word decided the question; for it was fact, argument, and illustration all in one.*

How much, too, might such resorts contribute to the cheerfulness of a people—how much to the spirit of society and of kind neighbourhood, and thus at once to health, virtue, and happiness. I say to virtue; for the recreations of a public promenade are not to be feared in this respect, as are those for which men resort to secrecy and darkness. I wish that the subject could be thought of, in our villages and country towns, as well as in our cities. Any man, owning a farm lot of ten, twenty, or thirty acres, in the centre of one of our country towns, might, at little cost, confer a benefit on all succeeding generations by planting it with trees, and bequeathing it to the town as a perpetual promenade and playground. The Sedgwick family have set a good example of this kind in Stockbridge (Mass.) What a delightful spot would be a shady grove in the centre of a village! Age and childhood, toil and care, would resort there for repose, for recreation, for enjoyment, for society. In some of the bright summer evenings there would be music. In process of time there would be statues and fountains.

From the Champ de Mars I walked to a public promenade on the northeast quarter, near to which is a magnificent palace, covered on the side (I could not see the front) with tableaux of sculpture, and on the top crowned with statues. The promenade is, as usual, amid trees; and here it was that I saw, for the first time—*i. e.* on a large scale—(yew trees are frequently treated in this way)—saw a whole grove, Heaven's beautiful work, cut and clipped into form of man's devising. It is cut pyramidally; and you look up through the avenues, defined by lines which nature never made and which nature abhors. So do I. My last adventure for the day, was to fall in with the exhibition of a juggler, who had spread his table and collected spectators in the street. We have no class in America corresponding to the conjurors of Europe. Their accomplishment is very extraordinary. The feats of this man, though he was but a common street juggler, filled me with astonishment. Meanwhile his wife went round among the crowd, asking such reward as the spectators might please to give, and taking all refusals so meekly, that I could not help giving something for her sake, if not for the sleight of hand. And, indeed, as to the morality of the matter, I

* Is it possible that there is any serious thought of giving up the Battery of New York to warehouses?

think it is not for the spectator to plead conscience in refusal of payment for that which he pleases to stand and see.

One capital peculiarity in the streets here I must not omit to mention. Two courses of hammered stone are laid in the middle of the streets, for the carriage wheels to run upon; so that there is a kind of railway all over the city. The consequence is, not only an immense relief for the burdens drawn, but an immense relief to the ears of the passenger. The carts and coaches roll smoothly and quietly on, and do not wind your nerves into knots, as you meet them — a case sometimes to delicate nerves only less horrifying than that of "the man under the bell."

Parma, *October* 14.—I left Milan on the twelfth, with vetturino, for Florence, and reached Placentia for the night, entering it by passing on a bridge of boats over the Po. It is a broad and noble river, and, like every stream that comes from the high ground of the Alps, as this partly does, hurries in its course to the sea. The largest portion of the waters, however, comes from the region of the Apennines. In the morning, as we left Placentia, we crossed the river Trebia, on whose left bank was fought the battle between Hannibal and Sempronius. From Placentia, we have come upon old Roman roads — first upon the Flaminian, and then upon the Emilian road. Of course, nothing is to be seen of the mighty hand of old Rome upon either, but the mound on which the road runs, which is raised several feet above the surrounding country. Streams of water, artificially introduced doubtless, commonly run in the deep ditches or canals by the wayside. The Apennines have been visible on the south all day. The line that sweeps their summits is singularly like that of our Taghkannuc* — gracefully undulating; Hogarth's line of beauty. The plains of Lombardy and Parma create something like a feeling of home in me too: they seem but an expansion of our own Housatonic† plains, with the Alps for our mountains, and the Apennines for our eastern range of hills: but these plains are by no means so beautiful; they are too extensive: they exceedingly want variety: field succeeds to field with its ranges of trees for the grape to run upon; nor are these boasted fields of Italy richer than our own. The general face of the people I rather like. The women appear modest, I can't say handsome — too dark: and the dark eye, which they almost all have, must be very bright and intelligent, not to be dull and unmeaning. The men appear grave and respectful, and not stupid. The aspect of their villages I do not like; and here, too, I find almost the whole population in *villages*. Where the houses are covered with the white hard plaster used in Italy, the appearance is fine; but otherwise, the brick with which they build is very poor, and the tiles, universally put on the roof here, are coarse, and carelessly put on, so that the houses look as if they must crumble to pieces in less than half a century. But more than all, there is something very heavy, clumsy, and dark about these long, unbroken ranges of village buildings; they look, some of them, as if they might be extensive penitentiaries; the lower stories, too, are commonly grated, and the grates are rusty, and the panes of glass are dirty, or there is no glass at all in them; so that the lower story, half of the time, does not look as if it could be inha-

* In Berkshire. † Ibid.

bited. On the whole I demur a little about stone or brick houses—certainly if the materials be not good—though I *have* thought it unfortunate that our people should not build more than they do with durable materials. I have been much inclined to say here, "Commend me to a nice, dry, wooden house, situated by itself, and not locked into a sort of barricade, an alliance defensive and offensive, with a hundred others—aye, and commend me to a house that has a wooden *floor* on it at least, if not a carpet, instead of these hard, damp, dirty, cold, comfortless, stone or brick floors."

Certainly, people here have the appearance of being very religious. I never enter one of the churches, morning, noon, or evening, and I constantly go into them—they are always open—I have been into half a dozen this afternoon—but I never enter them without finding votaries, and usually quite a number. How many times have I been into church, amid the gathering shadows of the evening twilight, and in the early morning, and found twenty or thirty persons kneeling in silent devotion! Yet if morality is in an inverse proportion to all this religion—what are we to say?

Sunday seems to be very devoutly observed here, though it is, compared with our usages, a kind of holiday. The whole population is abroad; and though the chief amusement seems to be that of walking or talking, others are evidently not forbidden. But mixed with this sort of holiday Sabbath-keeping, there is a good deal of religious observance. The people are constantly entering and leaving the churches. Some things, too, seem to be provided for the people while abroad. The great square of Parma has a church standing upon it, and at a certain part of the service, of which notice was given, I saw, this afternoon, the whole multitude, not less, I should think, than eight thousand persons kneeling upon the pavement. Just at evening again, there were processions of priests and friars, passing in different directions through the streets, bearing the cross and chanting hymns. I could not help reflecting, by the bye, that the methodists never do anything, seemingly, more extravagant. But I will not say extravagant. It was to me a solemn and touching spectacle. That cross, illuminated by bright tapers, borne on amid the solemn shadows of the waning twilight, lifted high among the people—the sign of hope, the emblem of death, but the pledge of victory over death—seemed to me fitly presented to the passing multitude, to remind them that light has come into a world of darkness, and life into a world of death—to teach those who are blindly groping their way on earth, that a way is opened to them through the gathering shadows of sin and sorrow, and through the dark gates of the tomb, to everlasting life and happiness. It will seem strange to you, perhaps, and incongruous with the scenes I have just noticed, as making a part of the Sabbath, that we had in the evening successive companies of musical performers, to entertain the visiters of the hotel where we were to lodge for the night; and yet this mixing of things together appears to be the very peculiarity of Sabbath-keeping here. First, there came persons with violins, and a violincello, and then a military band; and the performance of both indicated a cultivation that we never find in America. It will be long, in our country, I fear, before we *can* have anything like it. Thus does perfection come out of imperfection; for it is poverty, and it is a military establishment

that have produced this extraordinary accomplishment in the art of music. When is *our* country to work out a higher problem; and to show that everything graceful in art may be united with everything useful in society: nay, that gracefulness, beauty, perfection in art, is one, and not the least, of the interests of society?

Bologna, *October* 16.—I called to-day upon Professor L——, and had one of those "inexplicable dumb shows," one of those all-unutterable interviews, where the parties do not agree in that desirable prerequisite, a common speech. You have heard of talks, and palavers, and conferences, and *conversazioni*, aye, and of pantomimes, and of *looking* unutterable things; and you have, perhaps, some idea of all these modes of communication: but of all the methods by which human beings undertake to confer together, I imagine the most inconceivable is this talking in an unknown tongue, or in a tongue which one but imperfectly understands. It is both distressing and ridiculous. The distress is ridiculous, and the ridiculousness is distressing.

And which is hardest—whether to speak, or to hear a language you don't understand—I am not sure. You strive to talk, till you are ready to abjure all cases, declensions, tenses, moods, and especially all adverbs and conjunctions. You talk and struggle, but the more you talk, the less self-possessed you are, and the less able to do justice to your own knowledge of the language; and the more you struggle, the more inextricably you are involved in this confounding network of idioms and phraseologies. But the most ludicrous thing is the aspect of a company, listening to the unknown tongue. The words roll with most perverse facility and horrifying rapidity from the Signore's lips —and what adds to the vexation is, that the less you understand, the faster he talks—heaping up into dizzying confusion this mass of words, to help you to a comprehension of each individual one. Meanwhile, one looks on, with a lacklustre eye, and dumbfounded expression of countenance; another has every feature on the *qui vive* of intense eagerness; a third seems to catch the meaning—a ray of light falls, or seems to be about to fall on him; and not uncommonly, to fill out the picture, there is one in the back-ground, whose countenance wears a ludicrous mixture of anger and helplessness—"black as night he stands." At length, after a number of those pleasing efforts which end in total failure, the company, not daring to trust themselves for words of mere civility even, make their adieus in pantomime—glad, all of them, as if they were relieved from some spell of enchantment.

Bologna is at the foot of the Apennines; and I am glad to see hills once more. Bologna is built, like Berne in Switzerland, with arcades running all over the town.

The churches here, as well as everywhere on the route, are built in a terribly bad taste; a jumble of all orders, or rather a confused and clumsy mass of building, without order, and, as it would seem, without plan.

The road, all the way from the Alps, has been on a dead level. The small rivers, of which we have passed many, flowing from the Apennines to the Po, have all of them, with their spring freshets, made themselves great, wide, desolate paths of sand and stones, that look dismally.

The entire country is set out with rows of trees, mostly the elm, on

which the vines run, and often hang in festoons from tree to tree. This is the time of gathering grapes, and the whole land smells of the vintage. It is rather agreeable than otherwise, though not exactly the thing to excite very romantic ideas, being an ascetous fragrance.

This afternoon, at dinner, we had again some fine street music, from three blind performers; one on the violoncello, and two on the violin; and this evening, the same performers have been under my window, as I have been writing. My pen has frequently stopped, that I might more perfectly listen, or because the common-place thoughts that moved it, stopped: for I have scarcely ever heard, by the wayside, such strains of music. For ease, execution, and grace, they really reminded me of the performance of the Germans from the Royal Conservatory of Munich, which we had, you know, in New Bedford. Alas for me! — I had rather see the spire of our old church than St. Peter's at Rome: and I had rather, at this moment, hear our organ *out of tune*, than the finest orchestra in Italy!

Covigliajo, *October* 17.—I did not mean to write this evening, but the scene is too amusing to pass by entirely. This is the usual resting-place, on the top of the Apennines, and, in the general flocking from Florence and Rome, it is a place of great resort. The house is crowded to-night, and the scene is like one of those hostelries of former days, where soldiers and minstrels, gentlemen and beggars, nobles and their retainers, were crowded together in promiscuous confusion. People of all languages are here; waiters, hurrying to and fro, are invoked in every tongue; new guests are continually arriving; scene succeeds to scene, dinner to dinner, talking and laughing, drinking and smoking, crying children and anxious nurses, may be seen and heard all over the house. There were six persons at our dinner table here to-day, and we made ourselves out to be the representatives of five different nations. There was an English mademoiselle, and a Russian, and a gentleman from Siberia, and an Italian, and myself, an American.

I was intending, if I wrote at all this evening, to write a tirade against the Italian inns; this, however, is, in some points, an exception. But generally, out of the large towns, the inns are dreadfully uncomfortable; dark, damp, desolate places, stone floors, without a rag of carpeting, even by the bedside; the waiters all men — even those who make the beds and arrange the chambers, are men; and the men, the chambers, the floors, the tables, the dishes, dirty, dirty — everything dirty but the beds, and they are damp. I do not say, however, that the beds are full of vermin, though that is the common report. But for myself, I have not found a bug or a flea in Italy.

CHAPTER XIII.

FLORENCE — THE PITTI PALACE — MODE AND EXPENSE OF LIVING IN ITALY — CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE — MANNERS — GALLERY OF FLORENCE — CHURCHES OF FLORENCE — GENERAL ASPECT OF THE CITY AND ENVIRONS — FIESOLE — CLOISTERS — MONKS — HOLY DAYS.

FLORENCE.—Florence at last, this eighteenth of October. It is not Rome, but it is to the traveller the threshold of Rome; the last point of any long delay, before reaching the eternal city.

But to turn back again a little: the road from Bologna is over the Apennines, and it is very uninteresting; no scenery; the Apennines are best seen at a distance. On the top, I saw, what I never saw before, *orchards* of chestnut trees. By the bye, the chestnuts of this country—two or three times the size of ours—constitute a part of the food of the people. In every town and village, quantities of them are found at every corner, raw, roasted, baked, and boiled, soliciting buyers, and finding them in great numbers.

The descent from the Apennines is more agreeable than any other part, and especially as the traveller approaches Florence: six miles from which, the plantations of olive trees commence and cover the whole country. The tree is of the size of the peach tree; the leaf resembles that of our willow, only the green is much darker. The trees are now loaded with fruit, apparently near the state for pickling. We passed near the ancient city of Fiesole, situated on a beautiful slope of country, rising from Florence towards the north. At a convent on its summit Milton spent a considerable time—whence he represents "the Tuscan artist" as viewing the moon

> "At evening from the top of Fiesole."

The monastery of Vallombrosa, whose scenery he also celebrates, is situated about seventeen miles in the country above, twenty miles from Florence. It is the surrounding wood of Atebelle, to which he refers in the well-known words—

> "Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
> In Vallombrosa, where the Etruscan shades
> High, overarch'd, embower."

October 20.—Florence is a city of most confounding irregularity. I have found my organ of locality serving me very well everywhere else, but here it is utterly at fault. I am like "the man with the turned head." If I would reach any particular spot, I seem to myself to go directly away from it. "Hem! the Campanile, the Gallery, the Porta da Pinti—it is there," I say—and then set off in the opposite direction. It is really quite uncomfortable. I never feel myself settled in a place till I have rightly fixed the points of the compass. It is strange to me; and I feel more than I otherwise might, that I am a stranger. To have the sun rise in the west and set in the east—it is as if the very elements had ceased to be one's friends. Alas! they are some-

times the traveller's only acquaintances; as they are mine here*—for all the friends that I expected to find here are fled to Rome. But what a curious feeling it is, by the bye, with which one tries—and tries—to pull and heave the great world around and bring it right—and cannot! The north will *not* give up, and the south keeps back.

October 21.—Yes, and there are—I am considering the sky again—there are more glorious sunsets here than anywhere else; at least in a clear day: I have seen no gorgeous clouds like those which appear in our American horizon—but there has been a sunset this evening in a cloudless heaven, with a variety and softness of colouring, continuing for a whole hour, such as I have never seen before. I say not altogether a new thing, but something beyond.

I have spent the last two days in going through the Pitti Palace, the residence of the grand duke—or rather, I should say, through the gallery of paintings. It consists of many rooms, most splendidly furnished and finished: the floors of marble, ceilings arched and painted in fresco, and filled with statues; tables of porphyry, jasper, &c. with stones inlaid in many forms of shells, birds, flowers, &c. in the style called *pierre dure;* chairs richly gilt and cushioned; pillars of marble, and vases of alabaster, &c. But all this is nothing—though some of the tables cost thirty thousand dollars; the works of genius that cover the walls are the only attraction that any one thinks of. It is not what the Medici and their successors have done here (except as purveyors for the public taste) that draws the crowd, but it is what Raphael, and Michael Angelo, and Salvator Rosa, and Carlo Dolci, and Rembrandt, and Rubens, and Christopher Allori, and Chialli, and Andrea del Sarto, and many others have done.

[I had intended to strike out all such slight and hasty notices of paintings, as appear in the following page or two. But such is the eagerness among us to know everything that can be known about celebrated paintings, that I have been induced to let some of these notices, such as they are, stand in the manuscript. Nothing could have been farther from my thoughts, than publishing them, when they were written; or, indeed, anything else that belongs to the mere journal, in these volumes. I first name the painter, then the piece, and then add my comment.]

Petrazzi: the Espousals—the female espoused looking very serious and deeply satisfied—those around, with countenances much more moved from their common expression—that's natural.

Christopher Allori: Judith and Holofernes—a very powerful painting, no doubt; but how is it possible to paint a *woman's face*, whose hand clutches by the hair a bleeding head, which she has just cut off!

Raphael: La Madonna della Seggiola†—surely very beautiful—but I have something more to say about that.

Raphael: Madonna—(del' Impannata‡)—oh! very beautiful; the living, dark Italian eye of the youthful John—the glee of the infant—

* I should be ungrateful not to add, that I afterward made the acquaintance here of one of the most attractive and interesting, as well as the kindest men I ever knew, in the person of our sculptor, Greenough.

† So called because the Madonna is represented *sitting*. The *Madonna* here is more beautiful than any other I have seen of Raphael.

‡ From the paper window.

the fond adoration of the aged woman—the touching, admiring sensibility of the younger—the calm, satisfied, sweet expression of the Madonna—the mother in the Madonna!

Michael Angelo: the Fates—stern, calm, inexorable, and haggard-looking enough, and very powerful.

Salvator Rosa: a very horrible battle piece.

Leonardo da Vinci: female portrait—most exquisite softness and nature, like that I saw in the palace of Orange at Brussels.

Salvator Rosa: the Conspiracy of Cataline—the eye of Cataline shows the master.

Raphael: Vision of Ezekiel; in miniature, but amazingly striking.

Carlo Dolci: a head of Moses—like everything from his hand, fine in his way.

Ligozzi: Virgin and St. Francis—very touching expression of sadness. I should suppose "sad as St. Francis," would be a proverb: for they all make him a very desolate-looking being. He is in this piece represented as stretching out his hands to the infant Saviour.

Mazzolino: La Femme Adultére—small, but capital, especially the different countenances of the accusers.

Live Meus: portrait of himself—singular effect of shading the eyes—as if they were looking out of a dark closet; and scarcely anything can be seen but the—as it were, not the eye, but the meaning of the eye, mysteriously revealing itself.

Benvenuti (a living artist of this city):—fresco painting of the chamber of Hercules; very showy and splendid—his fault seems to lie in that direction.

Chialli: two pieces—one the choir of the Capuchins, and the other a funeral—wonderful perspective, like that of the Capuchin Chapel exhibited in America.

A statue of a little boy with a bird's nest in the one hand, and the other hand laid on and detaining the parent bird: so joyous, that you can hardly help laughing out with him.

Beautiful statues in the bathing-room. Some wonderful mosaics of scenery, with figures—the necessary lights and shadows effected by stones of different colours, and, where it is requisite, by an exquisite adjustment of the different colours of the same stone. Fine perspective is actually made in this way, and very perfect figures of men and animals given.

The *Holy Families* in this collection are almost innumerable, and many of them, certainly, are very beautiful; but the idea of sanctity among these painters seems to be rather negative—beauty, calmness, but no very high, intellectual, or moral expression. Even of *Raphael's* Madonnas I cannot but say this. They do not satisfy me. They do not come anywhere near to the beau ideal of saintly beauty in my own mind, and, of course, cannot satisfy me. The calm, but eloquent, touched, enraptured soul, spreading its mingled light and shadowing over the whole countenance; the lines of intellectual expansion and heavenly dignity and delicacy, drawn upon the temples and forehead; the thoughts—(such as we may suppose hers to have been "who kept all these sayings in her heart")—the thoughts that fill the depths of the dark eye, too strong for utterance: these things, and more that I

conceive of, I do not find in Raphael's Madonnas. The engravings of the Madonna del Sisto, at Dresden, it is true, show more of all this, more especially in the eye, which is full of a sweet and serious meaning. But while the Madonnas of Raphael here, are all very, very beautiful, the beauty is more that of form and colour, than of expression. They have not so much soul in them as some of the old Grecian statues. If, indeed, as is said, Raphael drew the idea of the Madonna's countenance partly from that of the Fornarina, it might be doubted, on every account, whether the result was likely to be very successful. In short, it is not Raphael's genius that I so much call in question here, as the very ideas which have thus far prevailed among men of genius, as well as the world at large, of what heavenly sanctity is.

October 23.—I have been to-day to see a collection of paintings in the palace of the Corvini family. There is an Achilles, Hector, and Priam, and other figures; the foot of Achilles on the dead body of Hector, in which the dead body is the best part; for the rest, the colours too glaring, and in the countenances too much distortion, and too little passion. There are many beautiful Carlo Dolci's, and striking Salvator Rosa's—especially of the former, the celebrated representation of poetry—beautiful enough, but with little enough of inspiration, as it strikes me, in the countenance.

It is curious to see how much mannerism all these distinguished painters have. Carlo Dolci paints almost in chiaro oscuro—nothing but *light shadow;* almost no colouring; and yet out of the dark ground —too dark—of the head and neck, he does cause to come forth most beautiful and natural faces. Salvator Rosa's pictures of nature are dark, and savage, and horror-striking, as we might imagine it to have appeared to Cain, after the murder of Abel. The same character appears in his historical paintings. The sea, indeed, when he paints it, compels him to throw a brighter splendour, and a warmer glow over the canvass. Then again, how distinctly to be marked is the simplicity, the keeping, the quiet, unpretending naturalness, the exquisite softness, of Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci. But Rubens, powerful as he is often, never paints without something of "the raw head and bloody bones" style; as if parts of his faces had been flayed, before he painted them. But I have gone far enough now, for a novice.

A great collection of paintings is like a great library. There is much trash* in both; many things ordinary, and some things glorious; and some parts of a *considerable* number—some passage of the book, some figure of the painting, or even sometimes only a single hand in a picture—that is finely done. Neither the great painter nor the great author always does things worthy of himself. Both are artists; and is not the latter an artist with greater advantages? The painter can do little more than exhibit one thought, in one single light; and it must be a thought, too, with which the world is already familiar. But the writer may unfold, explain, modify, enlarge, originate—give to the world new systems of philosophy, present religion and morals in new lights, unfold new regions of the beau ideal and the beautiful, and mi-

* That of the palace of Pitti, however, is, to an extraordinary extent, an exception from this remark.

nister, through every avenue of reason, imagination, passion, to the world's improvement and happiness.

As I came into the city this evening from a ride into the country, I witnessed a funeral procession. First, two torch-bearers — the torches lifted four or five feet above the head — then the cross raised aloft ten feet — then a procession of boys and priests in white robes, chanting the funeral service — the hearse covered with splendid housings; and last, another order of persons dressed in black silk robes; four of whom, bearing torches, closed the procession. The black dress was very singular, completely enveloping the head and whole person, and permitting only the eyes to be visible.

October 24.—"May you die among your kindred!" says the proverb; but if I would frame a good wish, I should be disposed to say, with only less earnestness, "May you live among your kindred!" Let no one lightly determine to travel in foreign countries *alone*. There is among us a reckless passion for going abroad, concerning which I would, while it forces itself on my mind, and before it is forgotten, in the hoped-for happiness of return, record my *caveat*. I say reckless, for it does not count the cost — it does not apparently suspect the sacrifice it is about to make. In Europe, this is felt *much* more strongly. I do not dissuade from foreign travel, but I would have every one go with his eyes open. I would have him, at least, see as much of the case, and estimate as many of the possibilities of suffering, as he can. But he cannot see or feel all, till it comes. No, let him not suppose that he knows, or can know, what it is to be *alone*, till he has stood in the heart of a mighty city, and felt that not one pulse in it beat to his heart — till he has seated himself in the solitary chamber of his hotel, and amid a thousand voices that issue from the courts, the stairways, and passages, heard not one that spoke his name, or his language — or heard, perhaps, from an adjoining apartment, the familiar sounds of domestic recreation and happiness, but found in it a contrast that increased his loneliness — felt that thin partition expanding itself into mountains and oceans between him and all such joys. Let him not think that he knows what it is to be *alone*, till he has been out in the streets of a strange city, and met thousands, gay and happy in their companionship, but not one that cared for him; or returned, and laid his head, feverish and throbbing, upon his pillow, and felt or feared that he might be sick and die among strangers — or, even if not, if never feeling or fearing this — till flung from the bosom of domestic life, he has been condemned to pass some few evenings of absolute solitude and silence, in that most solitary of all places on earth — a hotel. No, nor let him suppose that he knows what he may have to suffer in a strange land — what both sorrow and solitude may be — till the blow of calamity has found him *alone* — has fallen upon him where there is not one familiar object to lean his heart upon — till he turns his eyes back to some lovely countenance, which he left in the full glow of health, which he left with forced gaiety, saying, "I shall come soon again," and now sees cold and pale, and wrapped in the garments of the grave — every fair and sweet lineament of truth, disinterestedness, thoughtfulness, and affection, marked with the rigid lines of death — never more to be seen, not even as it lies in that last sleep, prepared for the tomb — never more to be seen, till the resurrection hour! God send

that hour in due time!—for *without* the hope of it, travel, methinks, would be treason to every stronger tie of life.

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October 28.—As the mode and expense of living in Italy are frequently inquired after in America, I will undertake to tell you how, and for how much, I live here. I have a lodging in one of those large open places, which is called in this country a piazza. By the bye, it is a very convenient term, to which we have nothing answering in English; for this Piazza Nuova di San Maria Novella—for as long as its name is—is neither a square, nor a parallelogram, nor a circle, nor a crescent, nor any other describable figure; and it is plain that we want a general term to describe an open space in a city, without any reference to the form of it.

Thus then am I situated; on one of the most agreeable piazzas in the city—my parlour windows looking directly upon the church of San Maria Novella, which Michael Angelo is said to have admired so much that he called it his *sposa*, and would sit, we are told, and gaze upon it by the hour. If this be true—though it is to me very incomprehensible, for the front of the church appears to me very ugly—I suppose he would have given as much for one of my windows, as I give for my two apartments; that is three pauls (about thirty-three cents) a day. My rooms are quite spacious, carpeted (!) and perfectly neat (!!), and the family who let them to me furnish them with chairs, sofa, and tables, bed and bedding, and are besides very attentive to all my wants and wishes; and all this for three pauls a day. I have my breakfast sent me from a neighbouring *café*, or my dinner from a *trattoria* (eating-house) near at hand, or I go to them for my meals, as I please. I prefer the latter plan usually, for it is convenient, in wandering about a city, to take my food just when and where the visitation of hunger or weariness may find me. After a delightful morning walk then—at nine o'clock, step with me into a café, and you shall behold a scene as fantastic as may be found in the hostelries of Arabia, and far more comfortable. In a suite of rooms opening into each other, twenty or thirty small tables are standing, and sitting around them, twice as many guests, perhaps—all with their hats or caps on—wearing every variety of costume, and speaking every variety of language. There is a good deal of bustle and noise—the clattering of cups mingling with the hum of conversation, and the calling of servants; but do not be discouraged; you shall ensconce yourself, if you like, in some quiet corner, and you shall have a bountiful cup, or bowl rather, of café au lait, and bread and butter to conform, and all for one paul. A boiled egg, or a bunch of grapes, shall be added, if you like; the grapes are delicious, and will be good for your health; and if you choose to mix more refined with these substantial gratifications, there is a basket of sweet-scented *bouquets*, hanging on the arm of that country girl, who has come here in the very hope that you would buy one. Nay, and if you will not buy one, it is very likely that she will lay one on your table, certain that if you allow her to do this one or two mornings, the consequence must follow.

Well, the breakfast ended—now let us away to the Gallery, or to the Pitti Palace, or to the Gardens of Boboli. After some hours spent there, at four or five o'clock, one may go to the trattoria (the dining-

place) fitted up like the café, and may have a substantial dinner for two, three, or four pauls. After this manner one may live in Florence for a dollar a day.

Dinner over, you may go to the opera, or if it be not too late, you may attend vespers in some of the churches. Here is the San Maria Novella just at hand—I often go there. But let me tell you, I do not go with stout and stern Protestant criticisms in my heart. I am rather disposed to say, "God bless you in these ancient, these eldest sanctuaries of the Christian faith, and make you sincere and happy!" I confess that the ridicule with which I find many Protestant travellers constantly speaking of the Catholic services, seems to me to be in very bad taste and in a very unphilosophical, not to say unchristian spirit. The whole Catholic system, in a broad view, presents, indeed, many grave questions: but what do the mass of these people know about systems? They worship as their fathers did—believe as their fathers did; and who can doubt that most of them believe sincerely, and that many who kneel around these altars, in seemingly rapt attention and in tears, worship devoutly?

The general character of the people is a different subject; and it is no doubt true that the traveller will meet with much dishonesty; that the most casual observer will see a great deal of corruption, and the initiated will perceive a great deal more. But I am afraid that it is not Italy, nor popery alone, that furnish evidence in support of the observation, that a man may be very religious in his way, and very immoral at the same time; though the immorality of one nation may be that of libertinism, and of another the immorality of drunkenness; though one nation's sins may lie in its gaieties and another's in its business, in the indulgence of selfish and ungenerous dispositions, or of coarse and brutal passions. Besides, is it sufficiently considered that travellers in general are conversant with only a certain portion of the population; and that a portion the most exposed to be dishonest and corrupt. The great thoroughfares of Europe, the Rhine, Switzerland, France, Italy, are crowded with travellers, whom their entertainers see once, and never expect to see again. The intercourse is, on both sides, deprived of those grand checks—personal acquaintance and public opinion. The *traveller* is too often not the same person abroad that he is at home; and for a like reason the entertainer is not the same man to his chance customer that he is to his neighbours. Is it proper then for the passing stranger to infer from what he sees of a country, the general character of its population? I should not wonder, if the stream of travel had essentially vitiated the regions through which it has flowed—if it had left its slime on the banks of the Rhine, in the cities of Italy, and even in the valleys of Switzerland.

But to return to the subject from which I have strayed—whatever else may be true of this people, they have certainly many winning ways with them. I have been in affliction since I came to Florence; and my host and hostess, by every delicate attention to my feelings during a few days of seclusion, seemed to sympathize with me as if I had been their son or brother. There is something, too, among these servants—a kindliness beyond the accomplished civility of the English serving man. The servant from the neighbouring trattoria, for instance, does not take leave after having spread my repast, without a bow, and wish-

ing I may make a good dinner. My hostess, besides frequent inquiries whether I need anything, does not leave my apartments, after having put my sleeping-room in order for the night, without her *felice notte*—her good-night. Just now she put upon my table a bouquet in a glass of water. The language, too, is full of indirect and delicate allusions. In respectful intercourse they never use the second person in addressing another; as, "Will you do this?" but they say, "Will he, or will the signor do this, or desire that?" Nay, as a still further compliment, they put you in the feminine gender; thus my Italian master, on taking leave, says, "*La riverisco*," "I pay my respects to her." As to this indirectness, I am satisfied that it is true to nature; for I well remember in my boyhood, that, in my intercourse with persons older than myself, and whom I highly respected, I was constantly seeking out such indirect expressions. If what is said of the growing forwardness of our young people is true, it may be that the practice and the feeling are quite worn out; and that when the sturdy young republican is asked how he does, he has nothing to answer with, but "Very well—how are *you?*" I do think again, as I have somewhere said once before, that here is a difficulty in our language. Our *Mister* does not seem to answer to signor and monsieur. We cannot say, "How does the mister?" as we might say, "How does the signor?" or, "*Monsieur, comment se porte-t-il.*" The Italian and French terms of address seem not to be like ours, mere prefixes, but rather like our terms of office.* Be this as it may—Heaven avert that the rising generation among us should lose that most beautiful trait of youth—modesty—deference—respect for age—respect for superiors! Let the manners of a nation want this—let a people become ill-bred, coarse, and vulgar—let, especially, the youth of a country be growing more forward and presumptuous, and let there be no sense, or refinement, or moral sensibility sufficient to put a check upon it; and vainly would such a nation claim our respect, though the sound of liberty were in every breeze, and parchment constitutions were piled to every roof-tree.

October 29.—What could be more strange than a translation from quiet domestic life in America, to a scene like this! I sometimes think if I were suddenly to meet an American friend in the street here, I should say, "How do you do, sir? Are you a bodily thing, or a shadow?" For truly I seem to live so much in a dream, that I doubt about surrounding realities. "Am I in Florence?" I say within myself. "Am I in Italy? *In Italy*—and yet sitting quietly in my room, as if nothing had happened to me; walking, and waking, and sleeping, in the majestic old Roman world, which in my schoolboy days I as little expected to see, as I now expect bodily to visit the moon!"

The Gallery of Florence, *founded by the Medici.*—There is a large collection of *busts* of the Roman emperors and their families, and as they are real portraits, that have descended from the times of the personages whom they are designed to represent, they are probably in the main correct. It is surprising to see what a number of these Roman ladies, the wives and daughters of the emperors, are just plain, substantial-looking women, without any grace or beauty—(though seldom ugly, as many of the men are)—without any of the charms which might

* In England, the terms master and mistress answer this purpose.

naturally enough be associated with the character of voluptuousness which many of them possessed.

*Hall of Niobe.**—Niobe is rather a coarsely executed statue, but the face is powerful. Mr. Greenough thinks this group is a copy of some far finer and nobler statuary.

Some of the paintings in the Hall of Niobe are amazingly fine; particularly and above all a *Synders*—Boar Hunt; a living picture: and *Gerard Hunthorst*—Night scenes: the Supper, and the Fortune-telling.

The Hall of Barrocio has fine paintings: *viz. Gerard Hunthorst*—Adoration of the Infant Jesus; of the same general character as to the effect of light, as his night scenes; indeed, he is surnamed Gerard des Nuits. The light in this picture is supposed to proceed from the body of the infant; three young females surround it; and the different expressions of countenance are strikingly suited to their respective ages.

Ange Allori: Descent from the Cross; the sorrow of the mother. Yet no picture on this subject that I have seen here compares at all with that in the cathedral at Baltimore, by the French painter Guerin;† compares with it, I mean, for effect upon the feelings; I will not be answerable for minor matters of colouring, &c.

Jean Baptiste Salvi de Sassoferrato: The Virgin—the face, the drapery, the blue mantle, all to me so wonderfully fine, that I cannot understand why the painter is not more known.

Portraits of painters, three hundred and fifty in number, painted by themselves; a capital Sir Joshua Reynolds among them. I mention it the rather, because in England I was disappointed in his paintings.

But the grand attraction of the Gallery lies in the Tribune, and in the second room of the Tuscan school. In the Tribune are the original Venus de Medici, and the Rotateur or Grinder, the Wrestlers, and the Dancing Faun, and also the Little Apollo. The last did not strike me much; but the other statues, it is easy to admit, are worthy of all their fame.

The Venus is held to be the model of beauty, and beautiful enough it is, and the beauty grows upon one at every repeated view. The Grinder is stooping down to sharpen his knife upon a stone. His face is turned up, and he is supposed to be listening to something about the conspiracy of Cataline. I do not know why he should be overhearing a conspiracy, rather than something else; but his face, certainly, and whole frame, are instinct with the most vivid expression of life.

The finest paintings, too, are in this room; and the finest of them all, perhaps, the finest of all Madonnas, I think (I do not say it, quite), is André del Sarto's Madonna, standing on a pedestal, and St. John and St. Sebastian on either side. Titian's Venuses here, beautiful as they are, do not seem to me to show so much talent as his Venus at Darmstadt. In the second room of the Tuscan school, *Mariot Albertinelli's* Visitation of Elizabeth, *Biliverti's* Joseph and Potiphar's Wife, and *Louis Cardi's* Martyrdom of St. Stephen, are things that stand in no need of a memento to save them from being ever forgotten.

As to the Pitti Palace, I must confess that I have been disappointed. I may be making a record, perhaps, of my own insensibility or igno-

* I offer the same apology here as before.

† He died four or five months ago at Rome.

rance; but I would ask, where in that collection are the paintings of power to strike the heart or thrill the frame, or to reach the fountains of tears? I have asked a distinguished artist the question, and he did not name one. Now all the arts—eloquence, poetry, music, sculpture, painting—are nothing else but modes of addressing the mind. And the three first-named arts can all furnish many productions that do address the mind with all the thrilling and subduing power, that I expected to find in this celebrated collection of fine paintings in Florence. Ought it not to be stated, in fact, as the distinctive merit of the Pitti Gallery, that it has remarkably few poor paintings, that it exhibits a vast deal of the finish and perfection of the art, but not of its highest power? Thus much I distinctly perceive and feel, but no more. Indeed, there are to me much more powerful paintings in the Gallery of Florence, than in the grand duke's palace.

The churches of Florence I like not at all; neither the outside nor the inside, neither the form nor the finish. They are of no known style of architecture; neither Grecian, nor Gothic, nor anything else. They are built, the most of them, in the cathedral form; that is, with a high central nave, and a lower range, or nave, on either side; and they require the Gothic finish and decoration, to bear out, or to relieve the essential deformity of this kind of structure; but they have it not—not one of them. Then the finish and aspect of the interior is generally tawdry; altars of various coloured marbles, and Virgin Marys dressed out in silks, and satins, and spangles; and, worst of all, the heads in many of the paintings having miserable tin, or possibly (it is all the same) silver crowns stuck upon them. The interior of the cathedral is indeed an exception; the pillars are of dark-coloured stone, and the general aspect is grave and solemn. But then the exterior is as monstrous a mass of ugliness as I ever saw; a huge mountain of a thing, checkered all over, if it can be credited, with intermingled white and black strips of marble. It is very much as if you should attempt to beautify a mountain by dressing it with checked gingham. The architect must have got his idea from some mantuamaker, or magazin des modes. And yet the York Minster could not have cost one-tenth as much as this cathedral.

Indeed, there has been a rage for praising Florence, which I cannot understand. I give my impression as it is—thinking honesty and independence absolute duties in a traveller. It may be because I have seen Florence under autumn clouds, or under some other clouds; but certainly I have been tempted to ask whether there be not some extraneous cause for this unequalled admiration, either in its history, or its great men, or in the fact that it is the first grand specimen of antiquity that meets the traveller coming from the north; or in a fashion getting currency in the world, nobody can tell why. For the houses and public buildings of Florence are not beautiful (I except the Campanile, and the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio); its squares are not beautiful; its streets are not beautiful; its environs—with the exception of a single ride down the Arno—are not beautiful. It reposes rather gracefully, indeed, in the lap of surrounding hills; but those hills are covered over—there are no stately trees—covered over with the least beautiful foliage in the world, that of olive trees. There are some vineyards too; but these vineyards are, like those in Germany and Switzerland,

perfectly uninteresting. The olive and the vine are names of romance to us in America; but they compare not at all with our orchards and our meadows.

I have been to-day to "the top of Fiesole"—to the monastery where Milton spent some weeks. Went into a chapel near by, said to have been a temple of Bacchus. The foundation and pillars of such a temple *may* have been left here, to experience the singular fate of being consecrated to this new purpose; for Fiesole was an ancient Roman town, and some ruins of it are still to be seen. Cataline's army, at one time, had its camp at Fiesole. The view from the top, of an extensive country, dotted over with white houses, amid the dark olives, is very striking. Both the produce must be great, and the mode of living frugal, one would think, for so dense a population to be sustained upon this tract of country.

November 1.—I rode a mile or two down the vale of the Arno to-day —the country too low, and too level; and certainly not to be compared, for a moment, with the intervals of the Connecticut or Housatonic; nor with twenty districts of country in England or Scotland.

The churches are filled with fresco and other paintings, the most of which I cannot be made to believe are worthy of much attention. They are either ordinary, or in bad lights, and the frescoes, most of them, are high away up in domes, where the eye cannot reach to discern their expression, if they have any. There are, however, some frescoes of Massacio, in the church del Carmine, and a Madonna of his in the cloister of the church del Annunciata, that are much admired, and are to me the best in fresco that I have seen. The cloisters, I may observe here, are not the secluded places I had been led to expect. On the contrary, they are open to the public. They are around an open and hollow square, within the monastery, and built in the form of Alcoves, or recesses, under the arches of which are paved walks. Here the monks walk; there is always a sunny side in a cool day, or a shady side in a hot day; and here anybody enters who pleases, to look at the fresco paintings with which the walls are usually covered. Some of these paintings represent, in series, the life of a saint; his conversion, sufferings, miracles, &c.; others are employed upon other sacred themes. Sad places they seemed to me, when I considered the solitary, weary lives that are worn out here—a single cypress, standing in one of the squares, with its dark foliage, and tapering, isolated form, seemed to to me the very *genius loci*—the emblem of humanity in these desolate cloisters.

The monks, however, as they pass about the streets, do not look like an unhappy set of people. The Franciscans, especially (though they do take their name from such a dismal saint as the painters, at least, have represented St. Francis), appear very cheerful, and are said to be in great favour with the people. The monkish dress consists of a tunic or gown, and narrow strip of cloth hanging in front, called the scapulary, and a cape or cowl, as the case may be, falling on the shoulders. That of the Dominicans is white; that of the Franciscans brown: the fabric of both a coarse, thin woollen. Some of the monks come so near being barefooted, that they wear only sandals. They live partly on charity, and partly on old foundations—many of which, however, were broken up by Bonaparte—the great ravager, despoiler, robber of the

Continent. And yet pictures, busts, statues of him are everywhere, as if he had been the world's great benefactor.

November 2.—To-day I have seen two or three things that interested me greatly, but I can only note them: the wonderful exhibitions of the human form in wax, in the Natural History collections—every part, and every possible section of the human frame, said to be represented with perfect accuracy; a painting, by young Sabatelli of Milan (only twenty years of age) of a Catholic miracle, the object of which is to convince a sceptic of the real presence—I advise picture dealers to inquire for Sabatelli: and the studio of the sculptor Bartolini. Such beautiful statues are there, as persuade one that the glories of the ancient art may revive.

Yesterday was All Saints' day, and to-day, All Souls'. The bells have rung, scarce more constantly than they do other days—that could hardly be—but they have rung in concert, in peals and chimes, till I have been utterly weary of them. What the sick do in such circumstances I cannot tell. Perhaps Florentine ears are so accustomed to the sound, that it makes no difference to them.

This evening, just at the close of twilight, as I stepped into one of the churches, I witnessed the singular spectacle, if spectacle it could be called, of a preacher addressing his congregation in almost total darkness. Perhaps it was considered as appropriate to the funereal character of the day; the object being, as I understand it, to pray for all souls in purgatory. Of the two, my sympathies, certainly, are entirely with All Saints' day. A festival to commemorate all saints, a day to remember all good men, a season around which is gathered the mighty host of those who, in faith and patience, in suffering and triumph, have gone to heaven—is one which it would be grateful to observe. I would not object to the invocation of saints, were I assured they could hear us. Why should it be thought a thing so monstrous, that I should ask some sainted friend that has gone to heaven—passed through all that I am suffering—to help me, or to intercede for me, if he knows my condition? I desire this of friends on earth—friends clothed with the weakness of humanity. Why might I not breathe such a thought to some angel spirit, whose wings may hover around me in mid air, though I see him not? But this would be the invocation of saints. I suppose it is the equivocal use of the word prayer, that creates a part of our Protestant horror of this practice. We say, it is praying to the saints; but the enlightened Catholic doubtless would say, it is not adoration—not praying, as to the Supreme.

CHAPTER XIV.

JOURNEY FROM FLORENCE TO ROME — THE DOMINICAN FRIAR — UPPER VALE OF THE ARNO — AREZZO — PERUGIA — ASSISI — VALE OF THE CLITUMNUS — TERNI — CIVITA CASTELLANA — BACCANO — FIRST SIGHT OF ROME.

On the morning of the third of November, some time before daybreak, I took my seat in a coach for Rome. As the light dawned, it disclosed, opposite to me, the full but strong and manly features of a young Dominican friar. His amiable countenance and gentleman-like bearing, at once awakened an interest in me, which was not a little increased when I saw him, as the light became sufficient for the purpose, take his breviary, and with an eye losing all its fire in the deepest sadness, begin to read the lessons of the day. I think I never saw anything more touching than the sadness of that eye. There was sincerity, I could not doubt, but there was evidently great unhappiness. Yet it was not the unhappiness of conscious guilt; but it seemed to me the unutterable distress which an honest mind must feel, in performing heartless and reluctant devotions. Indeed, that it was a commanded service, and one that he was obliged by his vow to perform, he distinctly intimated to me in apology for thus occupying himself. After he had read about an hour, he suddenly shut the volume, clapping the covers together with both hands, like a schoolboy his spelling-book; and the closing of the breviary seemed to act as much like a spell upon him, as the opening. His eye instantly brightened, his countenance recovered at once all its cheerfulness and amenity, and we began to confer together like "men of this world." I inquired of him concerning his order, and its duties and pursuits; and learned that he was going to Rome to pursue his studies, though he was already so far advanced that he was permitted to preach. I told him that I too was *un prete*. "No," he said, "*un ministro*." So here was an opportunity, I suppose, if my Italian had served for it, to enter into the whole controversy between the Catholic and Protestant churches.

But there was another question, I confess, in which, for the moment, I took a deeper interest; and that was about the effect of his duties upon his own character. When he understood what my objects in travel were, he said, "You are going to Rome for pleasure, but I am going for prayer." "But," I said, "will you not see the ruins, the galleries, the pictures, and statues?" He seemed to look very indifferently upon these objects; said that he might see them, but that was not what he went for; and then repeated the declaration, that he went for prayer, while I was going for pleasure. "But," I said, "*prayer* is a pleasure." He replied emphatically, pointing to his heart, "With the mind—yes;" and then laying his hand on the breviary, "but with the book—no." Poor fellow! he must nevertheless pray with the book, and with that eye of unutterable sadness, an hour every morning, and I know not how much beside. How difficult it is to settle the questions that arise between the *form* and the *spirit* of devotion! And is it not

impossible, in fact, to lay down *any* rule that shall suit all cases? I have no doubt, that, for almost all men, forms are good, *to a certain extent*—but what that extent is, must depend on many considerations —character, education, temperament, circumstances. And it is not unfortunate, perhaps, that there are various dispensations of Christianity to meet these various wants. All *could* not, in the present state of men's minds, be interested in the same dispensation. Were it not better, then, that different sects, instead of keeping up a perpetual strife, should harmoniously consent to differ; and thus walk in brotherly love, each one in its chosen way, to heaven?

But to leave the consideration of the great pilgrimage, for our journey: I found the upper vale of the Arno a pleasanter country than any I had before seen in Italy, since I left Lake Maggiore. Yet there is in this country none of the autumnal beauty of our trees and forests; the *variety* of trees is wanting here, and probably the sharp and sudden frosts. As for variety, field after field, mile after mile, and day after day (for two or three days from Florence), presented scarcely anything but the olive and a peculiar species of poplar, planted and trimmed for the vine to run upon. For this purpose the trees are cut into the singular shape of cups; or, taking the trunk and branches together, of a wineglass.

We expected to reach Arezzo the first day, but stopped for the night ten miles short of it. The next morning we passed through Arezzo, and spent an hour or two in walking about it. It is the birthplace of Petrarch, and of the painter Vasari. We saw Petrarch's house, and the painting by Vasari, of the banquet of Ahasuerus. This painting is in the abbey of the monks of Monte Cassino, and in the church of this abbey is "The Cupola in Perspective," a very wonderful painting by the Jesuit Del Pozzo. A flat ceiling is over your head; but you find it difficult to persuade yourself that it is not a dome of the depth of twenty feet. The cathedral of Arezzo is a fine building, and the interior, especially, is grave, solemn, and impressive. The entire ceiling is covered with paintings in fresco.

Cortona we passed by, and came on to Passignano for the night. This village is situated on the Lake Thrasymene, the scene of the great battle between Hannibal and the Consul Flaminius—a battle so fiercely contested, says Livy, that although there was an earthquake that day, which was felt throughout Italy, and shook down houses in the cities and villages, not one of the combatants knew of it. The battle ground is clearly described, and plainly to be seen from the road. The lake is a large and fine sheet of water.

Perugia.—The finest churches in Perugia are the cathedral, the church of the Dominicans, with a magnificent window of stained glass, and the church of San Pietro, filled with paintings. Among them are several of Perugino, the early master of Raphael, and several too of Raphael before he had escaped from the hard and dry manner of Perugino. Still there is about Perugino a softness of touch, from which Raphael doubtless derived that remarkable trait of his manner.

We passed Assisi, the birthplace of Metastasio, leaving it on the left. It is mostly inhabited by Franciscan monks; some of whom we saw in the church of the Madonna degli Angeli, looking dismally enough. The church was undergoing repairs, the dome having fallen; but amid

noise, and rubbish, and dust, were to be seen, in all directions, these kneeling monks.

Between Foligno and Spoleto is the river and valley of the Clitumnus: and here is a small ancient building now converted into the chapel of San Salvadore, which is supposed to have been the temple of Clitumnus. In the vale of Clitumnus, cattle were fed and fattened for sacrifices. It has been very striking all through Italy, to find the cattle either white or cream-coloured, such as were anciently preferred for sacrifices; and they have a fashion here, of dressing their heads after a manner like the use of the ancient fillets which bound the head of the victim—a relic, probably, of that custom. In this neighbourhood, at Ameria, was the birthplace of Roscius.

At Spoleto there is an ancient cathedral, with some good paintings; a very lofty aqueduct; and in the vicinity, fine wild scenery. The hills are entirely covered with evergreen oak.

Terni—situated on the Nar, or Neri. Three or four miles above the town is the celebrated cascade Del Marmore. It is on the Veleno, a river or canal which conveys the waters of the Lake of Luco into the Nar. The greatest of the three falls here is three hundred feet, and it is very well worth a walk or ride from Terni to see. There is a powerful description of it in the fourth canto of Childe Harold. As I came home from the falls in early evening and beneath a clear sky, I thought the splendour of the evening sky in Italy surpassed that of all other climes I had known, as well as that of the day-time.

The Vale of Terni is pretty, but neither this nor that of the Clitumnus is as beautiful as the Vale of Tiber, below Otriculo. The name of Tiber may doubtless spread a charm over it; but the windings of the river are certainly very graceful, and its banks are more like our own meadows than anything I have seen in Italy. These three vales would scarcely have drawn my attention as scenery, unless it were in a country so entirely destitute of scenery as that part of Italy through which I have passed. The ranges of the Apennines, however, which are passed over on *this* route, and especially about Narni and Terni, are by no means so barren and tame as those beyond Florence. There are spots, romantic and wild, and quite like Switzerland.

Civita Castellana, *November* 7.—Our Dominican has been ill during the whole journey. On the second day after leaving Florence, he was attacked with a low bilious fever, with which he has travelled the whole distance; and the way in which he has got along with it, is worth mentioning—the rather, as I think it is common on the Continent, in all cases where disease is not violent. It is remarkable that people here, either from being instructed on the point, as our people are not, or from use, or from some cause, adopt in all such cases, as did the Dominican, a certain plan; and that is *to eat nothing*. He took no medicine, and he eat nothing on the whole journey but a little *soup maigre*. He travelled almost the entire distance from Florence to Rome, with a fever that, in America, would have put him in bed and under the hands of the doctor. For the day past, he has been decidedly improving; and I do not doubt that to-morrow evening we shall leave him in Rome nearly recovered.

Yes, we shall leave him, to bury his mind in the rubbish of long-accumulating prescription; to pore over the dusty tomes of scholastic

theology; to draw from the armories of Bellarmine and Bossuet, weapons wherewith to fight heretics; to struggle on with his breviary, and his beads, and his offices; to merge his individuality in an order; to sink, a drop into the ocean of the church, and to be borne wherever the current of its mighty will directs. And yet my mind tells me, that this man will one day be a distinguished member of that church, or its more distinguished adversary. May he fare well!

This is the last sleeping-place on the journey; thirty-five miles from Rome. It is thought to be the ancient Falerii; where the schoolmaster, according to the Roman legend, offered, in time of siege, to deliver up to Camillus his pupils, consisting of the noblest families of the city. Camillus, says the account, caused the youths to be sent back, and the master to be soundly flogged.*

Civita Castellana took its name, I suppose, from the castle, a massive and noble structure. There is a strange-looking old cathedral here, the front of which was built, I believe, out of an arch, and still retains the same form. The entrance to the city, on the side towards Terni, is by a bridge, over a tremendous chasm.

Our road, thus far, has been the ancient Via Flaminia, but we left it here for the Via Cassia, which leads through Monte Rosi, Baccano, and Storta—places of no interest. Indeed, on leaving Tuscany, and especially in approaching Rome, the country and the villages have become more desolate and miserable. The worst villages I saw in Ireland are not so dismal.

On the eighth day of November, from the high land near Baccano, and about fourteen miles distant, I first saw Rome; and although there is something very unfavourable to impression, in the expectation that you are to be greatly impressed, or that you ought to be, or that such is the fashion, yet Rome is too mighty a name to be withstood by any such, or any other influences. Let you come upon that hill in what mood you may, the scene will lay hold upon you, as with the hand of a giant. I scarcely know how to describe the impression—but it seemed to me, as if something strong and stately, like the slow and majestic march of a mighty whirlwind, swept around those eternal towers; the storms of time that had prostrated the proudest monuments of the world, seemed to have left their vibrations in the still and solemn air; ages of history passed before me; the mighty procession of nations—kings, consuls, emperors, empires, and generations, had passed over that sublime theatre. The fire, the storm, the earthquake had gone by; but there was yet left the still small voice—like that at which the prophet "wrapped his face in his mantle."

* This, like almost everything else in the old Roman story, vanishes at the touch of M. Niebuhr.

CHAPTER XV.

ENTRANCE TO ROME—GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE CITY AND PEOPLE—FIRST IMPRESSIONS—A GLANCE AT ST. PETER'S AND THE FORUM—THE SEVEN HILLS—THE APPIAN WAY—TOMB OF CECILIA METELLA—FOUNTAIN OF EGERIA—THE COLISEUM BY MOONLIGHT—THE ESQUILINE HILL—THE CHURCH DI STEFANO ROTONDO.

November 10.—The entrance to Rome by the Porta del Populo, or Gate of the People, presents a view that is noble and worthy of the Eternal City. A large square, or rather circular open space, spreads before you, from which three streets run diverging, and penetrate into the city—the Corso in the middle, the Babuino on the left, and the Ripetta running along the Tiber, on the right. On the points, between these streets, stand two small but beautiful churches. In the centre of this place—or Piazza del Populo—stands an Egyptian obelisk. On each side of the piazza are fountains, and over these fountains, and all along upon the surrounding walls, are statues. It is really an appropriate introduction to Rome—or to what you feel that Rome should be. Should be, I say—for, alas! Rome, as a city, separate from its works of art and its ruins, is a dismal, dirty, disagreeable place. Its streets are narrow, dark, damp, and, above all, filthy, to a degree that is insufferable and inexpressible. No writer could dare to defile his page with a description of the horribly indecent uses to which the streets, squares, and public places of this city are put. Besides, in walking, you are thrust down to the lowest level of the streets; there being no sidewalks in Rome, except upon a part of the Corso. The people in the streets generally appear ill-clad, poor, and dirty; and beggars present themselves at every point, and at every moment. One gets to be absolutely afraid to look any man in the face, lest he should stretch out his hand and beg. Amidst all this begging and filth, a hundred fountains spring up in every part of the city, sufficient to wash the streets and the people: pity they are not applied to both purposes! As to the general countenance of the population—I have seen prevailing gravity and depression before—but never did I see such a cloud upon the face of any people, as that which has settled down upon the Roman brow.

November 12.—I have been four days in Rome, and am scarcely convinced, yet, that I am here. I seem to have arrived at the consummation of my dreaming. I walk in my sleep altogether. This comfortable fireside at the Hotel de Londres—this pleasant chitchat—these agreeable friends; no sign of desolation here; no sound of its mighty footsteps; how can all this be in Rome! In truth, these common sights and sounds of city life and bustle, these common avocations and actions, rising in the morning, making one's toilet, eating one's breakfast, and walking abroad, are so at war with all one's impressions about the wonderful, glorious, transcendent, and majestic of Rome, that it is difficult to bring them together. Contrasts here heighten impression; and they

heighten it in another respect. For I think it is not only the schoolboy's impression which we entertain about the glory of Rome, but it is the schoolboy's wonder, in part, which we feel at being here. "Ah! little thought I," says Rogers—

> "Ah! little thought I, when in school I sat,
> A schoolboy on his bench at early dawn,
> Glowing with Roman story, I should live
> To tread the Appian * * * *
> * * * * * * to turn
> Towards Tiber * * * * * *
> * * * or climb the Palatine."

If Rogers might say this, much more may I, who conned my lesson three thousand miles farther off than he.

I said it was the schoolboy's impression that one has about Rome, and conformably to this remark, I found my first voluntary steps directed to the Forum. Circumstances before this carried me to pass two or three hours at St. Peter's, of which I will only say now in passing, that it is a structure of stupendous magnificence (*that* is the characteristic feature—not solemnity, nor sublimity exactly, for one is not aware of the size), and that it does not, at first view, offend the eye, as I expected it would. This, indeed, is far less than we ought to be able to say, of a building of such boundless expense as St. Peter's; yet I cannot doubt that there are several structures in Europe, which, from their general form and architecture, afford a higher pleasure than this. But to pass this by for the present—what shall I say of the Forum, on and about which I have passed the last two days? Denominated now, Il Campo Vaccino—The Cow Pasture; waste and desolate, or trodden by a set of wretches employed in digging into its ruins, and not worthy to dig up the ruins of what their ancestors built; a field, the very soil and substance of which are the mouldered dust of ancient glory; surrounded by a few columns and porticoes, that stand the mournful landmarks and witnesses of what it once was—who can look upon it without feeling a blank, a disappointment, though he had known all this before? Where was the Rostrum? where the Comitia? where did Cicero plead? There is not a stone to tell. An entire portico of one temple is standing; three columns of another; but of *what* temples is matter of dispute. Three other columns lift their beautiful shafts in the opposite quarter of the Forum; but to what they belonged is not certainly known.—There is not one locality of *ancient* Rome here, but it is disputed.

I went this morning to the top of the Capitol, from which all Rome, modern and ancient, is visible—the hills, the distant ruins of temples and aqueducts, the surrounding Campagna. In passing the eye along from east to west, the Seven Hills come in the following order: the Aventine (lying from the Capitoline southeast), the Palatine, the Cœlian, the Esquiline, the Viminal, and the Quirinal. Some of them appear from this point of view scarcely as elevations, covered as they are with houses.

I descended from the Capitol, passed through the Forum towards the Aventine, and found the temple of Janus with its four gateways—a beautiful and massive ruin—the *little* arch of Septimius just by, and farther on, the temples of Vesta and Fortune. I then went to the top

of the Aventine, and came down across the Circus Maximus, lying between that and the Palatine—the scene of the seizure of the Sabine women by the Roman youths.

November 17.—Three or four days ago, I went out on the Appian Way, once lined with monuments, appearing now itself like a lengthened tomb—with nothing living upon its silent and deserted course, with scarcely any relics indeed to tell what it once was—the street of mausoleums and temples, through which the Roman people, as they rode, were reminded at every step of their mighty dead. We visited the tomb of the Scipios, and, with the aid of lights and a guide, traced out its subterranean passages. It was a family tomb, and several of the sarcophagi remain untouched; though the finest of them, that of Cornelius Scipio, is removed to the Vatican. We next rode to the beautiful and majestic monument of Cecilia Metella, the largest Roman structure of the kind remaining, I believe—except the monument of Adrian in the city, which is now converted into a military establishment, and called the Castle of St. Angelo. Strange use of a tomb it is, but still more strange that the tomb of a lovely woman should have been converted to this use, as was that of Cecilia Metella in the times of the middle ages.* Lovely woman, I say, for so one is apt to think of her to whom such remarkable honour was done. Nothing, indeed, is actually *known* of her, but that she was the wife of Crassus, Pompey's competitor for popular favour, and afterward his colleague in the first triumvirate. One has little respect for him, indeed: the early contest between him and Pompey was essentially a contest between wealth and talent, and his after course was not honourable. The most respectable action, to my mind, which we know of him, is his building this noble monument.

From the tomb of Cecilia Metella we went to the fountain of Egeria, a spot which, in former days, when the country about Rome was cultivated, may have been beautiful enough for the residence of the Muses; but alas! there are doubts about the locality, as there are concerning almost everything else here.

November 22.—This evening I went to see the Coliseum by moonlight. It is indeed the monarch, the majesty of all ruins—there is nothing like it. All the associations of the place, too, give it the most impressive character. When you enter within this stupendous circle of ruinous walls, and arches, and grand terraces of masonry, rising one above another, you stand upon the arena of the old gladiatorial combats and Christian martyrdoms; and as you lift your eyes to the vast amphitheatre, you meet, in imagination, the eyes of a hundred thousand Romans, assembled to witness these bloody spectacles. What a multitude and mighty array of human beings, and how little do we know in modern times of great assemblies! One, two, and three, and at its last enlargement by Constantine, more than three hundred thousand persons could be seated in the Circus Maximus!

But to return to the Coliseum—we went up, under the conduct of a guide, upon the walls, and terraces, or embankments, which supported the ranges of seats. The seats have long since disappeared; and grass overgrows the spots where the pride, and power, and wealth, and beauty

* By the Frangipani family.

of Rome sat down to its barbarous entertainments. What thronging life was here then! what voices, what greetings, what hurrying footsteps up the staircases of the eighty arches of entrance! and now, as we picked our way carefully through decayed passages, or cautiously ascended some mouldering flight of steps, or stood by the lonely walls—ourselves silent, and, for a wonder, the guide silent too—there was no sound here but of the bat, and none came from without but the roll of a distant carriage, or the convent bell from the summit of the neighbouring Esquiline. It is scarcely possible to describe the effect of moonlight upon this ruin. Through a hundred rents in the broken walls—through a hundred lonely arches, and blackened passage-ways, it streamed in pure, bright, soft, lambent, and yet distinct and clear, as if it came there at once to reveal, and cheer, and pity the mighty desolation. But if the Coliseum is a mournful and desolate spectacle as seen from within—without, and especially on the side which is in best preservation, it is glorious. We passed around it; and, as we looked upward, the moon shining through its arches, from the opposite side, it appeared as if it were the coronet of the heavens, so vast was it—or like a glorious crown upon the brow of night.

I feel that I do not and cannot describe this mighty ruin. I can only say that I came away paralysed, and as passive as a child. A soldier stretched out his hand for "*un dono*," as we passed the guard; and when my companion said I did wrong to give, I told him that I should have given my cloak, if the man had asked it. Would you break any spell that worldly feeling or selfish sorrow may have spread over your mind, go and see the Coliseum by moonlight!*

November 23.—I have spent most of the day in wandering alone over the Esquiline hill, though, except the ruins of the baths of Titus, there is little save recollections to make it interesting. They occupy the spot where the house and gardens of Mæcenas stood, and near by were the houses of Horace, Virgil, and Propertius. Holy mount! dwelling-place of genius, and of its noble friend and model patron—who that walks alone over your silent and deserted summit can repress his sadness, as the memory of the past, and the spectacle of the present, contend for mastery in his mind, and with all the power of contrast, make the vision brighter, only to turn it into the deeper darkness!

November 24.—I have been this afternoon to the Church di Stefano Rotondo, said to have been built by Agrippina for her husband Claudius, destroyed by Nero, and rebuilt by Vespasian. At any rate, it retains the form of an ancient temple, consisting of two concentric rows of Ionic pillars of granite, with one transverse row apparently to support the dome. It is circular, and the wall is filled entirely round with fresco paintings of every horrid species of martyrdom. Such is the change that has passed upon everything in Rome. As I came through the Coliseum, a company of friars were going around in solemn procession from altar to altar, and performing religious service on the very spot where their elder brethren by thousands had poured out their blood; the mighty walls seemed to frown at the triumph of the despised and

* The outer wall of the Coliseum is one hundred and seventy-nine feet high. The area of the building is six hundred and nineteen feet long, by five hundred and thirteen broad. That is to say, it covers nearly four acres.

persecuted religion. But whether they frown or not, it is certain that all the remains of antiquity, whether religious or heroic, are made to bear marks of the ascendency of the new religion. Not a column, Egyptian or historical, stands here, but bears on its base something to this effect — that "being purified from pagan abominations, it is consecrated" thus and so, by some Pontifex Maximus.

CHAPTER XVI.

ASCENT TO THE TOP OF ST. PETER'S — MICHAEL ANGELO'S PAINTING OF THE LAST JUDGMENT — EXCURSION TO TIVOLI — WATERFALL — TEMPLES OF VESTA, AND THE TIBURTINE SIBYL — VILLA OF ADRIAN — PAINTINGS AT THE ROSPIGLIOSI PALACE — LIVING IN ROME.

November 29 — to the top of St. Peter's; a very easy thing to do, so gradual is the ascent made. Our view stretched from the Mediterranean on one side, to the Apennines on the other, over the whole wide and desolate Campagna. This tract of country consists mostly of pasturage lands, unenclosed, with a broken surface, and few houses or trees. In the comparatively small tracts upon it, where tillage is attempted — and it is attempted only by mountaineers from the Apennines, as I am told — many lives are annually the sacrifice. The diseases caused by this malaria are chiefly bilious and intermittent fevers, and being so, I see not why there is anything more mysterious about the malaria, than there is about the marsh miasma of our own country low grounds. The city is choked with rubbish; the lands want draining. But to return to the top of St. Peter's: we went up into the ball on the top of the dome, and found that, although it does not appear much larger than a man's head from below, it was of a size sufficient to hold twenty-two persons. Another fact may better show the immensity of this structure. The dome of St. Peter's is as large as the Pantheon, or rather larger indeed. That is to say, it is one hundred and forty feet in diameter at the base, and one hundred and seventy-nine feet high.* Michael Angelo boasted that he would "hang the Pantheon in air," and this cupola *is* raised more than two hundred feet above the pavement of the church. But what is raised? Why, a mass of masonry; not a wooden dome, but a cupola of brick, *twenty-three feet* in thickness! The passage to the summit is within this wall. That is to say, as you go up this stairway, you have ten feet thickness of wall on each side of you. The whole wall is equal in thickness to the width of most of our city houses. And this stupendous mass is "hung in air." It is not only putting one immense church on the top of another, but with such walls, as were never perhaps put into any building standing on the ground, except the Pantheon.

November 30. — To-day I walked two hours on Monte Pincio; the weather so mild, as to be almost too warm; and a haze over the city and surrounding country, very like our Indian summer. There was

* The Pantheon is one hundred and forty-two feet in diameter, one hundred and forty-two in height, and the wall twenty feet thick.

that stillness in the air — that hush of nature in which, as in a clear evening, every sound from hill and valley comes distinct upon the ear — that silence, amid which the fall of the leaf is heard — and that soft and shadowy veil upon everything which makes our Indian summer a holy season — the Sabbath of the year.

December 2. — I have been to see Michael Angelo's celebrated painting in fresco, of the Last Judgment, and I am one of the unhappy dissenters from the common opinion. In the first place, I must have leave to doubt about the design altogether — that of representing the Resurrection and Judgment, by a collection of distinctly drawn figures. It leaves nothing to the imagination. The style of Martin's pictures, it seems to me, would be far better, whatever may be thought of the execution. Much should be thrown into obscurity. But in the next place, there should, at any rate, be given a great depth, an immense perspective, to such a picture: the field of vision should stretch away as it were into infinite space. But my eye can find nothing of this. Here is a wall, the entire end of the chapel, filled with figures, and they all seem to be in the same mathematical plane, one directly above another—drawn with a staring distinctness of bold outline and muscular form, and thrown together in a strange confusion, so that the Judgment appears like a physical conflict, a rude mêlée, a scene of disorder, utterly at war with the solemnity and majesty that belong even to the popular conceptions of that occasion.

December 3. — To-day I have been to Tivoli, eighteen miles from Rome, on the Consular road. The waterfall here, on the Anio, aided in its effect by the grand cavern adjacent, called the Grotto of Neptune, and by the violence of its dashing upon the rocks below — the wrestling of the furious element in the abyss to which it is plunged — may be said to be almost sublime. On the brow of the precipice above, and above this war of the wild elements, stands, appropriately, the temple of the Tiburtine Sibyl; and near it, Vesta's temple; both the most ancient ruins, in appearance, that I have seen in Italy. They are both small, but well preserved, and the latter especially is one of the most exquisite remains of antiquity. I stepped into the former, to look at the seat of the wild and mysterious prophetess: it is now a Christian chapel!

The villa of Mæcenas here — once the seat of taste, if it *be* his — is now a blackened forge.

The villa of Adrian is, if less changed, even more desolate. The Theatre (for the villa was seven miles in circumference, and included many buildings) is now a cabbage garden; the Maratime Theatre is covered over with brambles; the temple in imitation of that of the Egyptian Serapis — with the covered niches for the oracles to speak forth from — and the temples of Apollo, of Diana, and of Venus — in the last of which, the Venus de Medici was found — all of them have but single mouldering arches standing; the quarters of the Pretorian Guards are silent and tenantless — the porticoes are all fallen — not a column, not a capital remains; the Latin and Greek libraries now teach wisdom only from their ruinous recesses, through which every storm rushes; and to complete the picture, that most striking of all the images of desolation ever recorded was realized to us;* for as we

* "The fox looketh out at the window."

were looking up at the ruin of the Greek library, a fox appeared on the top of the ruin, and passed down upon the other side.

The Villa D'Este in Tivoli has many fantastic fountains and cascades, and presents a noble view of the Sabine hills on the north, and of the Campagna, extending to Rome. The Campagna bordering the hills about Tivoli, is more smooth and meadow-like than I have seen it elsewhere.

December 4. — The Rospigliosi palace has a small collection of very rare paintings:—

Guido's Aurora — a fresco — very celebrated and very justly. I have scarcely seen any fresco like it. The chariot of the morning, directed by Phœbus, preceded by Aurora scattering flowers from her hand, and surrounded by the Hours, is advancing amid a crimson cloud, upon the wide, blue ocean, while in the distance of the fine perspective, the horizon is glowing with the first steps of coming day. The countenances of some of the Hours are very lovely, and a little study will bring them out, so as almost to make them return your glance.

Ludovico Carracci's Death of Samson. He is represented in a banqueting-hall, as taking hold of a pillar, which is broken in his grasp, and the building, already shattered, is evidently about to crush him and his enemies. His muscular form, and the expression of horror and agony in his face, as well as of fear in one very lovely female countenance, together with the rich tone of the whole, make this one of the finest paintings I have seen.

Domenichino: Garden of Eden; Adam, a fine face; Eve, without being handsome, a countenance marked with feeling, and full of expression; the landscape dark, as if the shadow of a thunder cloud had come over it; and so, I suppose, it is designed to be represented; for it is after the fall, as I judge, since Adam is apparently gathering leaves from a fig-tree, and presenting them to Eve.

Domenichino: Triumph of David; he is represented as a very delicate and beautiful youth; the head of Goliah borne by a page before him; while the song of triumph is chanted by the procession of women, that "came with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music." But the Saul is above all magnificent; a tall and noble figure, a fine head and countenance, and such an expression of disappointment and sorrow, that though it be called envy, one cannot help respecting it.

Rubens: The Saviour, and Twelve Apostles — separate pictures, and very richly and elaborately wrought; with a freshness and vivacity of colouring free from extravagance, and a softness and fineness of touch, seldom seen in the paintings of Rubens.

From the Rospigliosi palace I went to see the tomb of Caius Cestius, just by the Porta di San Paolo — a beautiful pyramid; and thence to that most extraordinary hill, near the south wall, called Monte Testaccio; and so called from its having been formed of broken vases, crockery, &c. thrown out here during a course of years, or rather ages. I returned home by the Tiber, and passed the little remaining ruins of the Pons Sublicius so called from the wooden piles which supported it. It was the first bridge built over the Tiber. It was on this bridge that Horatius Coccles is related in Roman history to have stopped the army of Porsenna, till the Romans had destroyed the part behind their leader, and then threw himself into the river, and swam to the city.

December 5.—Nothing specially worthy of note calls for a record this evening. I have passed the day mostly in-doors, as it is one of the many that go to make up the very large proportion of the damp, cloudy, and disagreeable ones we have here. Yet every day passed in Rome seems memorable. What an event should I not have thought it, at any former period of my life, to have passed a day in Rome! I think it such still. I do not see how life can ever be common life, on such a spot. In truth, it seems as if one had no right to enjoy the common comforts of life, amidst such ruins—the ruins of a world passed away—the mighty shadows of ancient glory spreading over every hill—the very soil we tread upon, no longer the pathways of the old Roman masters of the world, but the mouldering rubbish of their temples, their palaces, their firesides—the yet almost breathing dust of a life, signalized beyond all others in the world's great history. One feels that it would be an appropriate life here, to sit down like Marius on the ruins of Carthage—or to burrow in the Coliseum—or to pitch one's tent alone, in the waste and silent fields, amid the rank grass or the thick and towering reeds, that have overgrown so large a portion of the ancient city.

CHAPTER XVII.

VATICAN —RAPHAEL'S TRANSFIGURATION —DOMENICHINO'S COMMUNION OF ST. JEROME — THE RAPHAEL CHAMBERS — WALK ON THE TIBER — JEWS' QUARTER —STATUE OF THE DYING GLADIATOR —A WALK AMONG THE RUINS —RELIGIOUS SERVICE AT THE GESU E MARIA.

December 7.—I have been to the Vatican to-day to see two paintings, sometimes said to be the greatest in the world: namely,

Raphael's Transfiguration, and

Domenichino's Communion of St. Jerome.

In Raphael's picture, the transfiguration occupies the upper part of the canvass; while on the lower is a painting of the maniac youth, brought to the disciples to be healed. I must confess that the lower part is, to me, the finest picture. There is a vivacity of expression and vividness of colouring which I have not seen in any other *oil* painting of Raphael's. The Communion of St. Jerome, too, is a wonderfully fine, rich, deep-toned painting. Yet, although to artists, these paintings, as exhibiting light and shade, composition and colouring, may be the highest achievements of the pencil, I cannot feel as if those were, or ought to be, the greatest productions in the world, which are capable of no more highly wrought *expression* than these. They certainly are not the most moving pictures in the world. And yet even to my inexperienced eye, they are so beautiful, that I was fairly wearied out with pleasure and admiration in looking at them.

December 9.—Again to the great paintings at the Vatican—the *greatest*, as they are called. I feel, the more I look at them, that they are, indeed, great. The solemn and sublime expression in the counte-

nance of the ascending Saviour — (in Raphael's Transfiguration) — the lightness of the whole figure, appearing as if it had no physical weight — (but I do *not* like the Moses and Elias) — the soft touch, the *Raphaelic* mildness in the countenance of John, who, with the other two disciples, is prostrate on the mount: and then, in the lower painting — the poor idiot boy, the group around him, agitated, anxious, and imploring in various ways, suited to the several characters — the beauty of the woman, the mother, I suppose, who kneels beside the child, and, pointing to him, looks at the disciples with an eye to make one weep; on the other hand, the disciples, irresolute, like James and Andrew, and the one with a book — a fine figure — or like Judas, who, in truth, is like no other, dark, cold, indifferent, and contemptuous — all this lives upon the canvass, and must live always in the memory of all who have seen it. So, also, the Domenichino — Communion of St. Jerome — though the figure of the aged saint, with his naked body, bloodless, livid, lifeless, and almost dead, is disagreeable, yet is it powerfully drawn: and the faces of the men by his side are shaded, sad, and lovely; and the little light that does fall upon them is wonderfully represented; and there is about the whole, a truth and depth of colouring, which makes you feel as if the painting could never fade, but was, indeed, destined to that immortality, which the artist has figuratively gained by it.

From these paintings, I went to the Camere di Raffaelo (the Raphael Chambers), to see his celebrated frescoes: and I yield entirely to the observation, that the power of Raphael is not known in his oil paintings.

The School of Athens here, though it is usually singled out for special admiration, and some of the figures and heads are, doubtless, of the first order, yet appears to be much injured by time, and I cannot, though I have stood a great while before it to-day, feel it to be the greatest thing here. The Heliodorus, Horseman and two Angels, in the second chamber; the Parnassus in the same; the Conflagration of the Borgo San Pietro, in the fourth chamber; and the Victory of Constantine over Maxentius, in the first chamber — are to me the great works. The horseman, especially, seems to me a sort of Apollo Belvidere in painting. He has rushed in, sent by Heaven at the prayer of the high priest Onias, to avenge the intended sacrilege of Heliodorus, prefect of Seleucus, in the pillage of the temple. In the back ground, the interior of the temple is opened to view, and Onias and his brethren are seen kneeling in prayer. It is on the pavement in front of the temple, that the horseman appears, ready to trample beneath the feet of his charger the prostrate Heliodorus. His blue mantle flies back over his shoulder, giving additional life and expression to the muscular and energetic frame which it reveals. But it is in the face that the great power lies. His dark eye is filled with sovereign indignation; his lips are clothed with triumphant wrath; his fine countenance is mantled over with an intense expression, which I cannot better characterize, than by calling it the beauty of power — of power to punish the sacrilegious intruder. The two angels that accompany him are also exquisitely painted, especially in that appearance of lightness — lightness of step, in particular — by which they seem scarcely to touch the pavement of the temple. The fear-stricken group, too, about Heliodorus, is admirably drawn.

I might go on to write many pages about the other pieces: but I am sensible that you will easily excuse such vain attempts at describing what, after all, never can be described, any more than one can take an oration of Demosthenes, and tell in other language what it is.

December 11.—Yesterday I went and lingered awhile on the Tiber, in a sort of dream of doubt whether this could be I—or whether this could be the Tiber by which I was walking. I passed over the river, and came back by the bridge of Cestius, that conducts across the Isle of Tiber—which was formed by the sheaves of Tarquin's harvest field, thrown into the river after his expulsion: so say, at least, the old annals of the early and half-fabulous history of Rome.

On coming over the bridge, I turned to the left into the Jews' quarter—situate on the bank of the river, and walled in from the rest of the city. It is curious to see how peculiar everything is in this little district; the women fairer than the Roman women generally seen in the streets, and all of them having the Jewish female countenance—the keen and dark eye, the colour in the cheek; and the men all showing the national propensity, the love of gain—saying continually, as I passed along by the shops, "Domandi, signore."

To-day I have been to the church of San Gregorio, to see the rival frescoes of Guido and Domenichino; but they are very much faded, and they will, doubtless, fade from my memory—unless it be by a sweet boy of Domenichino's who, in his fear and agitation at the flagellation of St. Andrew—that is the subject—has pressed close up to his mother, and stands on tiptoe. We saw also the table off which Gregory is said to have eaten; and a fresco representing his sending missionaries to England.

December 12.—I have been to-day through the museum of the Capitol again, and have become a convert entirely to the common opinion about the Dying Gladiator. The truth is, I did not take time enough before, and especially, not enough of that mental time, which is quietness—ease of mind—leisure of the thoughts, to receive the impression. The gladiator has fallen, but with the last effort of his unconquerable resolution, he supports himself with his right hand and arm, and seems to contemplate his sad fate with firmness, but with a feeling of inexpressible bitterness. It is not, however, the bitterness of anger; for death is in his face, and it has tamed down the fiercer passions, and left no expression inconsistent with its own all-subduing power. Though he appears as if he might be a man of an humble and hard lot, yet there is a delicacy spread over the stronger features of his countenance that makes it almost beautiful; you feel as if there were more than the whiteness of the marble in his pale cheek. But while he thus yields to his fate, while the blood flows from his wounded side, and the pulses of life are faint and low, yet he still sustains himself; his hand is firm and strong; his brow is gathered into an expression of unconquerable resolution as well as of unavailing regret; and although when you look at the parted lips, it seems as if you could almost *hear* the hard breathing that issues from them, yet about the mouth there is, at the same time, the finest expression of indomitable will and invincible fortitude. In short, this is the triumph of mind over the sinkings of nature in its last hour. Everything here invites your respect, rather than your pity; and even if you should find yourself giving a tear to

the dying gladiator, you will feel that it is given quite as much to admiration as to sympathy.

December 13.—I have been to-day among the ruins of the aqueducts, Caracalla's baths, and the palace of the Cæsars. I have been, in the way I like best to go, *alone*. There is something in the presence of these mighty relics that consorts with no human presence. They represent past ages. They strike the mind with a sort of awe, that makes the ordinary tone of conversation seem to be irreverent and profane. Let any one who would feel these ruins, see them alone. Let him listen only to the winter's wind, as it sighs through the leafless trees, or rustles in the tall reeds, or sweeps around broken columns and falling arches, shrill and mournful, as if the voice of centuries past and gone breathed in its melancholy tone. I like to walk about in such places, as if my feet obeyed no impulse but the wayward spirit of my contemplation; stopping or going on, as that spirit moveth me; now leaning against a wall, and then drawing one step after another, as if they did not belong to each other, and scarcely belonged to me; now musing, and now gazing, with none to disturb the act; now breathing a sigh, and then uttering a prayer. And surely there is cause enough for both. For who can refuse the tribute of his sadness to a desolation so stupendous, so complete; or can help praying sometimes, in such scenes, that everything earthly, low, and selfish, may die away within him!

These aqueducts are glorious ruins, especially as you ride along the Campagna towards evening, and see a glowing western sky through the long line of arches on which they are raised. These immense works then seem to blend with the vastness of the horizon, and to partake of the sublimity of nature. The site of the palace of the Cæsars is worthy of its name; the Campagna and the Apennines on one side, and on the other, the whole of Rome; beneath it, on the left, the Forum; on the right, the mighty Coliseum. With temples and triumphal arches filling up the view around its base, what must it have been, and what ideas might it have awakened in the minds of any but the degenerate emperors who long inhabited it!

December 14.—I attended service at the Gesu e Maria, to hear an English sermon; about which I have nothing to remark, except that the preacher constantly translated the word "repent" in the new Testament, by the words "do penance;" but at the same time explained it as the doctrine of his church, that penance implied penitence as its first principle, its very essence, and that, without which the Catholic church held no penance to be satisfactory.

The interior of this church, like that of a hundred others here, is covered with precious marble, and filled with statues and paintings. Not a few of these works of art are, to be sure, quite ordinary; but I could not help being struck, to-day, with the aspect given to them in a devotional service, by the aid of a little sentiment and imagination. As I gazed around upon them, during the voluntary on the organ and the singing from the orchestra, it seemed as if every statue, and the countenances in every painting, were clothed with fivefold greater expression than before; one might feel as if they represented the hosts of heaven joining in the worship of earth; or, breaking through the barriers of wall and dome, he might behold the spaces of the universe filled with choirs of angels, and resounding with voices of thanksgiving.

CHAPTER XVIII.

VATICAN — LIBRARY — MUSEUM OF STATUES AND ANCIENT REMAINS — APOLLO DI BELVEDERE — ENGLISH COLLEGE — SARCOPHAGUS OF CECILIA METELLA — MAMERTINE PRISON — GARDEN OF SALLUST — ORDINATION SERVICE AT ST. JOHN OF LATERAN'S — THORWALSDEN'S COLLECTION OF PAINTINGS — GUIDO'S ARCHANGEL MICHAEL — PRISON OF THE ROMAN DAUGHTER — CHRISTMAS — SPECTACLE AT S. MARIA MAGGIORE — CHRISTMAS — SERVICE AT ST. PETER'S.

December 15.—I have been to-day again, and for the sixth or eighth time, over the Vatican, the pontifical palace; and I shall put down here the few words more I have to say about it.

I first went through the famous Vatican library, in which the things that interested me most, besides the immense amount of books and manuscripts, and the extent of the rooms, one range of which is twelve hundred feet long, were a fresco of Mengs, and in a small cabinet, a female head of hair, taken from one of the sarcophagi of the tomb of the Scipios.

The museum of statues and of ancient remains is immense. You first enter a hall of ancient sarcophagi and inscriptions. Many of these inscriptions bear affecting testimony to the sorrows of bereavement — the same in all ages. "Dulcissimæ," "Carissimæ," "Bene merenti," "Venustæ Conjugi," "Optimo viro," are words of frequent occurrence in these tablets.

In passing on, you come to the celebrated *torso;* but I never can go into ecstasies about the *back* of a man.

Before coming to this, however, you may turn to the left into some rooms of ancient busts, many of which are admirable. There is a naturalness of expression in them, that I have never seen in any collection of modern busts; and a variety too. The obtuse, the intellectual, the dull, the gay, pass before you in succession; and there is, especially, a smile upon some of the faces—upon one youth in particular, who shows his whole teeth — that is quite irresistible.

There are, indeed, many statues of children, of various ages, in the museum, which are so full of all the life, sport, drollery, and roguishness of children, that it makes a collection perfectly charming. "The ancients loved children," said a connoisseur whom I heard remarking upon these statues one day; and though it may seem a simple remark enough, one is struck with it, in looking at them.

Equally striking and natural are the statues of animals — dogs, sheep, goats, swine, &c.

The collection of objects, antique, curious, rare, and valuable — of vases, candelabra, baths, sarcophagi, in all kinds of beautiful and polished granite and marble — is immense and indescribable. At any rate, they have never yet been described. The French, when they were here, put numbers on all the works of art in the museum, in preparation for a catalogue: but like many other things which they began, while they were masters of Italy, this has failed to be completed. But

that which interested me most, among this class of objects, was a mosaic floor, from Cicero's Tusculan villa. Though it is railed in, I was resolved to walk across it, and so I did; and doing so, was much more sure that I had trodden on the very spot on which Cicero had stood, than I shall be, if I visit the ruins of Tusculum.

I must pass over a great number of statues, to say a word of the Laocoon, and the Apollo Belvedere. I have one remark to apply to both, and that is, that the original work, the marble, in both cases, is far more powerful than any casts I have seen. I did not expect this. I did not see why the cast would not give the general, the main expression, intended to be conveyed by the original work. And so indeed it does: and when I saw the cast of the Apollo, in the Boston Athenæum, I thought nothing of the kind could ever strike me more. I was arrested and thrilled through by the very first sight of it, as if pierced with one of the arrows of the god of light. But there certainly *is* conveyed by the marble, though not a new idea, an expression of the great idea, which is clearly stronger than can be gained from the cast.

What the beauty and power of this unequalled statue is, it would be utterly impossible for me to express; it would be folly to attempt it. No repetition of visits, no preparation for the first visit—no praises beforehand, so prejudicial to the effect of most other works of art—can alter, diminish, or dull at all, the impression of this incomparable production. There it stands, in its unchallenged sovereignty—a god, indeed, in the dominion of the arts—commanding the homage of successive crowds, as they pass before it in successive centuries—without an equal, rival, or competitor, in all the works of the human hand. What a divinity of beauty, what a sovereignty of intellect, what dignity of conscious power, is stamped upon every feature! What an intensity of expression concentrates itself, as it were, upon every point of the countenance, and yet spreads itself over the whole! You can hardly persuade yourself, as you gaze upon it, that there is not an actual *glow* upon the cheek and brow. For my own part, I am paralysed by this wonderful work, so often as I see it. I sit down and gaze upon it, in a sort of revery, and do not know but I sometimes say aloud, "Oh! Heaven!"—for really it is difficult to resist exclamations and tears.

December 19.—This morning I passed two or three hours at the English College. It is a Catholic institution, designed to educate young men for service in England, and has twenty or thirty students. As I happened to be with Dr. Wiseman, the rector, at the dinner hour, half-past twelve o'clock, I went down with him to the Commons' Hall. I observed, as we entered, that one of the young men was reading aloud from a desk, and found, on inquiry, that this is their custom, both at dinner and supper; though the rule is suspended when a stranger is present. At the close of dinner, we all passed from the hall to the chapel, where they knelt down for ten or fifteen minutes, in silent devotion. This service is voluntary, both as to the duration and the meditations of each individual—there being no liturgy or form for the guidance of their private thoughts—and I confess it seemed to me a very beautiful and touching service. I wish religion were stamped, more than it is with us Protestants, upon the whole face of life.

As I passed by the Farnese palace, I went into the court to see the sarcophagus of Cecilia Metella. Alas! to "what abhorred uses may

we" and our tombs "come!" A hole was broken through the marble in one side of the sarcophagus, and it appeared within—yes, even there, where the form, perchance, of beauty and loveliness was once laid down to its holy rest—as if it were the habitation of vermin! It was once deposited in its proud mausoleum—girded around, and guarded from every prying eye, by walls twenty feet thick; it is now subject to the inspection of whosoever may please to turn aside his foot for the purpose; it stands neglected in the waste and open court of a Neapolitan palace.*

I went to-day again to the Tarpeian rock. I do not know how any doubt can be raised about its being of sufficient height to cause the death of criminals precipitated from it. *I* stood upon a part of it to-day, from which the descent must be seventy feet.

My last object to-day was the Mamertine prison, in which it is said St. Peter was confined by Nero. It is a very deep dungeon, worth visiting on its own account; but I certainly had a great deal of faith as I stood in its dark and narrow cell, that the eye of the generous and affectionate apostle, whom wavering *once* made strong *for ever*, had gazed upon its gloomy arch. I do not well know what evidence can be stronger than an uninterrupted and uncontradicted tradition. Here, too, is a church erected over this prison, to commemorate, to fix this very fact. But a still further demand is made upon our faith. In descending to the dungeon, there is pointed out on the wall the impression of one side of a man's head and face, and the visiter is told that as Peter descended these steps he was struck by one of the attendants so as to be thrust against the wall, and that the wall miraculously softened, to prevent any injury—thus receiving the distinct impression of the apostle's countenance. I could not help remarking—let that prove what it may—that the profile in the stone very much resembled that which is given in all the paintings of St. Peter. After all, I wish it were true! You will think I am becoming a Catholic outright. But seriously, I do not wonder that some number of those who visit Rome do become so—especially artists, enthusiastic persons, &c. I have scarcely spoken of these churches yet; but I have become a perfect church worshipper. I pass some hours of every day in these places—places more sacred in everything that belongs to the appearance, arrangement, and keeping of them, than any other that I ever saw. When I am weary in my walks I turn aside and sit down in them; when I am destitute of an object in my rambles, they are always a resort; when I am—in short, there is no state of mind in which they do not invite me. Nor do I ever fail, I think, to be sent back to the world again, a better and happier man, for having entered them. But I must take in hand to speak of them more fully at another time. You will judge, however, from what I have said thus far, that I have none of the Protestant horror at a Catholic church; not a particle of it!

December 20.—I have been to-day to the garden of Sallust, the Roman historian. It was an immensely large villa, on the east side of the city, originally within the walls, and stretching from the Quirinal hill to Monte Pincio. Only ruins remain of the house, circus, a temple, &c. From a terrace on the grounds, is the finest view of Rome that I have seen.

* This palace belongs to the court of Naples.

Indeed one needs some direction about the best points of view. I had a grand one yesterday from the top of the Tarpeian rock, but I stumbled upon it. It embraced the whole south part of the ancient city, now a waste. The ruins of Caracalla's baths, the palace of the Cæsars, the arches of Constantine and Titus, the Coliseum, and the majestic remains of the Temple of Peace, stood before me, ranged in the order in which I have mentioned them, and the solitary remnants of the Forum were at my feet. From no point have the ruins of Rome been so completely spread before me, and from no point, for that reason, perhaps, have they appeared so majestic.

December 21.—There was an ordination to-day at St. John of Lateran's, of nearly a hundred young men for the offices of priests, deacons, &c. and I spent half an hour there. I scarcely ever witness any of these Catholic ceremonies without thinking how much might be made of them in the proper hands—in the hands, that is to say, of persons of talent, taste, and sensibility—which the priests and monks usually are not. In the service to-day, for instance, music was frequently introduced; it made a part of the service, breaking in at intervals every few moments. How powerful, how overwhelming might it have been, if it had been discriminating and appropriate—if it had been a cheering tone, when resolute purpose and courageous faith were expressed on the part, or on behalf, of the candidate—if it had been tender and soothing, when his coming trials were held up before him—or if, when his holiest and deepest vows were uttered, it had been a strain low, solemn, and full of awe.

December 22.—I have visited to-day the museums of Thorwalsden and Camuccini. They are both collections of paintings by living artists. Thorwalsden himself accompanied us through his rooms, which, by the bye, were no other than his own private apartments, including even his bed-room. He appears to be about sixty years old, of a most amiable countenance, and simple, unaffected manners. His collection is very rich, especially in paintings of landscapes and ruins, and in the miniature Dutch style of common life. Of this last class are two pieces of Meyer's—(German)—"The Letter written," and "The Letter received"—capital. So in landscape is the snow-clad scene, and in architectural painting, besides other pieces, there are two of the ruins of the Forum, that are inimitably fine.

This afternoon I heard, at the Gesu e Maria, a very eloquent young Irish preacher.* His voice and manner were exceedingly good; his whole bearing and style were simple, dignified, and effective. In short it was, in style and manner, the best sample of preaching that I have heard since I came abroad. His subject was the Claims of the Catholic Faith; and he especially urged upon Protestants, that those who believe in the deity of Jesus Christ ought, for similar and stronger reasons, to believe in "the real presence."

December 23.—The great pleasure of to-day has been the seeing of Guido's Archangel Michael, in the Church della Concezione. A part of the design, it is true, I dislike. The devil, into whom Michael is about to plunge his sword, is represented as a man—strong, muscular, gross, passed into years, if not old, and with the head bald. Michael,

* Mr. Miley.

who is represented as a youthful angel, has his foot on Satan's head, and to this part of the design I object. It is the foot of youth and strength upon the aged head. I do not like a design which presents an idea so ungrateful: and besides, the whole appearance of Satan is rather disagreeable and revolting. But turning to the Michael, no form or features expressive of youth, and beauty, and energy, and calmness, and triumph, and pity, could be more perfect. The frame is full of energy in every muscle: the lifted hand grasping a sword, is strong to execute the commission to destroy; the feet, one upon the head, and the other upon the ground, appear as if he had just alighted upon his victim; and the face — but who shall describe what it is! So youthful — so delicate in its youthfulness; with the fairest possible complexion, and wavy golden ringlets; so resolute, so assured in its resoluteness; so calm, at the same time; but above all, so pervaded with inexpressible, beautiful, angelic, pure, youthful pity, with its soft shading about the eye, and its emotion almost disturbing the firm decision of the lips — and altogether so surpassingly lovely, beautiful in might, overpowering in gentleness — it is not Satan that he conquers, but every beholder!

I attended a service this morning at the English College, in which a priest, recently ordained, chanted his first mass. The service was interesting, and the music, in part, fine. Was interesting, I say — and yet who can tell, when music, strain after strain, wave after wave, is passing over his soul, now drowning it in a delirium of pleasure, and then bearing it away into boundless revery — who can tell whether he judges rightly of any of the things or themes that come before him?

December 24.—I visited to-day the Church of St. Nicolas in Carcere, built over the prison where the *Roman daughter* is said to have performed the celebrated act of filial piety, which saved her father's life, and eventually procured his pardon. We satisfied ourselves with looking down into the prison, into which there is no descent but by a temporary ladder: and, in the mean time, believed as much as we could about the story. And, indeed, I think it is much the wisest part to believe, in most of the cases, of interesting, wide-spread, popular legends. Why should not many of these things be true; and what so well accounts for the origin and prevalence of a story like this of the Roman daughter, as the fact? The extreme of scepticism is quite as weak and unphilosophical as the extreme of faith, without being half so agreeable.

The town is all alive this evening with the approaching festival of Christmas — the bells ringing; the people abroad; services in the churches. We have just been to one in the Sistine Chapel; and so much does the spirit of the time possess us, that we are going at half-past four o'clock to-morrow morning to a Christmas morning ceremonial, at the S. Maria Maggiore.

December 25.—This morning we went to Maria Maggiore, an hour before day-break, and were repaid for the trouble. It was one of those sights that one must cross the ocean to see — I might say, rather, to see anything like it. It is an immense church, divided into three naves, supported by a great number of marble and granite Ionic pillars, having large and splendid chapels on each side of it, and all lighted up this morning with rows of chandeliers and innumerable waxen tapers.

Still, however, there was left enough of obscurity in the vistas and roofs of the naves to make the church appear twice as large as it is. Among these pillars, and under these extended ranges of lights, and far away beneath these dim but gilded roofs, were to be seen a vast multitude of people, in various groups, and in almost all possible costumes and attitudes. There were soldiers in their uniforms, in two columns, stretching through the whole central pavement; there were priests in their various dresses passing to and fro in the discharge of their various offices; and groups of persons in all the variety and liberty of the Italian costumes. In one place were a company of people kneeling before an altar; in another, lying by the wall, or at the foot of a pillar, was a small cluster, weary and half asleep, of people, looking like a family of wild men and children from the mountains; other parties were walking to and fro, as we were ourselves. Meanwhile the Christmas chant sounded out from the Chapel of the Sacrament, sometimes in a thundering chorus, and then in a softer strain. On the whole, the scene, I must say, had no appropriate impressiveness; but it was nevertheless very interesting in its way—that is, as something bizarre, wild, and fantastic. It seemed as if the place were not a church, but some vast palace or mighty hostelry, described in an Arabian Night's Entertainment.

At nine o'clock this morning we went to the celebration of the high mass by the pope at St. Peter's. Here, again, was a ceremonial of exceeding splendour, and in an entirely different style. All here was order and solemnity—more appropriate, though scarcely so striking.

St. Peter's is the place of all places for a great religious celebration, where bodies of military are to be introduced. All other places they always seem to encumber; here a considerable body of troops were paraded in different divisions, and in different parts of the church, and there was ample space for them, and for all the multitude besides. One of the most striking proofs of the immense magnitude of this place I noticed to-day, in the sound of the military music, which was soft, and seemed distant, as if it had come from a field or a tract of country considerably removed. Indeed, this music was the most interesting part of the solemnities of the day, with the exception of the elevation of the host—when the whole multitude, including the military, kneel upon the pavement. This prostration of a mighty multitude, and of all the power and splendour of it, before the symbol (as it is regarded) of God's presence, is, indeed, a very affecting spectacle; and when it takes place in the noble piazza in front of St. Peter's, on occasion of the pope's benediction at Easter, and the multitude is almost countless —when every knee bows, and an immense body of troops fall prostrate on the pavement, as if awe had struck them like death, I can easily believe what a gentleman told me, that he had known a man remarkably devoid of all religious emotion, to burst into tears at the sight.

CHAPTER XIX.

TEMPLE OF FORTUNA MULIEBRIS — CORIOLANUS — CATACOMBS — COLLEGE OF THE PROPAGANDA — MAUSOLEUM OF AUGUSTUS — THE APOLLO AND LAOCOON — SERVICE AT THE GESU — CARDINALS — THE POPE — WALKS OUT OF ROME — FOUNTAINS AND OBELISKS.

December 26.—I have ridden on horseback to-day to the temple of Fortuna Muliebris, four miles out of the city. This is the spot which tradition assigns for the meeting of Coriolanus with his wife and mother; the temple was erected to commemorate their success, and Rome's deliverance; and, to mark the former, was called Fortuna Muliebris, or *Woman's Success*, as I should render it. The temple itself is a small and ruinous building of brick, that would scarcely attract attention; but when I reflected, that it was on that gentle swell of land, perhaps, that the stern Coriolanus stood and received his imploring wife and mother, and there yielded to their tears — there passed through all the struggle and agony which brought him at length to those memorable words, "Oh, my mother! thou hast saved thy country, but thou hast destroyed thy son!" it needed no ruin or monument to awaken imagination, on a spot thus consecrated to one of the noblest and most touching scenes in history. In the old Roman history, indeed, it stands quite alone. It is the only instance, I think, in which, on a public theatre, the old Roman haughtiness ever yielded to the power of the sex. And surely a nobler victim was never offered at its shrine, than Coriolanus.

From this spot, we returned on the Via Latina, and passed over to the Appian Way, to visit the catacombs under the church of St. Sebastian — or rather, commencing there — for this subterranean burial-place extended for a number of miles, quite into the city, running under the Forum, and having an outlet in the prison under the Church of St. Peter in Carcere. The spot is very interesting, for having been the refuge and residence of the early Christians, in times of persecution. It consists of narrow passages, cut out of a spongy rock, which absorbs moisture, and thus renders the place more habitable than I could otherwise well have thought it. It was far drier than I had expected to find it. Before, it was always a mystery to me, indeed, how men could live in such a place. The guide took us to a small excavation connected with one of the passages, where was a rude chapel, having a crucifix and a place for the altar at the end. And here it was that the sad, and trembling, but true-hearted company, kneeled down to pledge their faith and trust in the name of their rejected Master. But the times of suffering for conscience, the times of moral martyrdom, are not yet passed; and St. Sebastian himself, to whom this church is dedicated, felt no keener arrows in his body* than those which often-

* This was the mode of his martyrdom, and he is constantly represented in paintings with arrows piercing his body.

times pierce the soul, in the relationships, the uncertainties, the separations, the changes, and strifes, of this mortal state.

The day has been most delightful; and a ride on horseback, in *the vicinity of Rome*, along the majestic ruins of the aqueducts on going out; and on our return, amidst the giant remains of the Palatine, the Coliseum, and the Forum, seen by the soft and waning twilight of a lovely evening—this is enough for one day.

December 29.—I had an interview to-day with the rector, and some students, of the Propaganda. I learned from them that this celebrated institution for propagating the Catholic faith, is governed by a board of twenty cardinals; that its income is about one hundred thousand dollars* per annum; and that its present number of students is about one hundred, of whom thirteen are from the United States. The rector is a German count, apparently not more than thirty years of age—M. Reisach; and the young gentlemen with whom I met were American students. We had much conversation upon various topics, for two or three hours, some minutes of which I shall just note. They stated the surprising fact, that the pope's annual expenditure, for personal and household purposes, is only fourteen thousand dollars. They ridiculed the idea that he has sent, as has been alleged, the sum of one hundred thousand dollars, from his private purse, to America; nor has the Propaganda, they say, ever expended on American missions more than thirty or forty thousand dollars. On the subject of exclusive salvation, they stated a doctrine, saving a little tinge of assumption, as liberal as any one could desire. It was, that sincere conviction of being right must spread its shield over all those who entertain it. The assumption lay in an implied reservation of rightful supremacy for the Catholic church; but they distinctly held, that if any man should leave the mother church, from sincere and honest conviction, the dissent was not to be deemed fatal.

December 30.—I hunted up this morning the mausoleum of Augustus; yes, hunted for it. Little thought the man, once deemed so important to the world, that it was said, "It had been good for mankind if he had never been born, or had never died"—little did he think the time would ever come, when his proud mausoleum must be searched for, or when found at last, would be found surrounded and hidden almost from sight by other houses—itself a stable and a tannery. I asked a picket of soldiers within fifteen rods of the spot; and with the habitual ignorance and impudence united, of the common people here, on such points, they would have sent me first to the Coliseum (a mile off), and then to the Castle of St. Angelo. Of the mausoleum of Augustus, they knew nothing! Marcellus, the nephew of Augustus, celebrated by Virgil, was buried in this spot. I confess, it interested me more, as the place where this promising youth, the hope of the people, was laid down to rest—as the place where Octavia poured out a mother's tears—than for any associations with imperial grandeur; although in Augustus it had a noble representative.

I went to see the Apollo and the Laocoon to-day, and gazed upon them (especially the first) for a while, with the sad feeling, that it might be my last look. Yet the Laocoon, much as the other has the

* It was three hundred thousand dollars before the French were here.

preference, is awfully tragic and powerful. The tremendous muscular energy and contortion, but all in vain; the imploring sons, with a youthful, an almost infantine expression of countenance, as they raise their eyes and hands to their father; the fatal complication of folds in the huge serpent; but most of all, the Laocoon himself—the agony of the parted lips, the expression, almost more than mortal, of suffering and horror beneath the eye; the accusing brow—accusing Heaven for the terrible severity of his lot—yes, those *folds of accusation*, above the right eye in particular—all is wonderful; it is dreadful; and for this reason, is a less admired work, than if the subject were more agreeable.

But the Apollo—oh heavens!—I am ready to exclaim again—that sovereignty of conscious power and superiority—it is as if his very look—no arrow needed—as if his very look would kill; and yet, that look is all beautiful! It is a countenance as if its bare thought could annihilate, and yet the spirit of all gracefulness so pervades it, that it seems as if the fair creation might spring forth beneath its glance. I may never see it more; but I could as soon forget the sun in heaven, after having once seen it, as forget this representation of the god of light, and brightness, and beauty, and power.

December 31.—I visited this morning the studio of Camuccini, one of the most celebrated living painters. He has great talent, and his studio presents many fine paintings, and yet finer sketches. He has taken hold, too, of the old Roman subjects, so much neglected in general—Regulus, Horatius Coccles, Virginius, Curius Dentatus.

This afternoon I attended a service at the Gesu, appropriated to the close of the year, consisting chiefly of music. Good singing, though too noisy—that is the constant fault here: great execution on the organ, of which they have three in this church; a stupendous assemblage of people, filling this immense temple and all the chapels to overflowing; the church itself, a rich and solemn edifice, with gilded ceiling, with paintings and statues, and marble pillars, and pilasters, and altars: the dim arches and majestic dome, seen obscurely by the light of the declining sun, and afterward, of innumerable wax tapers—all this, with the occasion to help it, made it a scene not easily to be forgotten. I wish we had more of these things with us Protestants. Meet it is that the epochs of this mortal and momentous existence should be thus signalized!

January 2.—We attended a party lately at Cardinal W——'s. As we do not know much about cardinals in America, and as they are the highest officers in a church to which the most of our people feel a superstitious strangeness, they may be looked upon, perhaps, as quite a preternatural set of beings. Be it known to you, then, that a cardinal's palace is very much like other mansions of the distinguished classes, and that a cardinal's party is very much like a great New York or Boston jam; that is, after you make your entrance: there is much more parade on being introduced—a tremendous throng of carriages—soldiers in attendance—and a noisy, repeated, and sometimes ludicrous announcement of the names of the guests as they pass through the anterooms; ludicrous, because here are names from all parts of the world to be pronounced, and a man will sometimes find it difficult to know his own, in the mouths of these Italian ushers. A large proportion, indeed, on all these occasions, is English; and here were several

of the English nobility jostled in the crowd, and bearing nothing in their manner to distinguish them from others; simplicity is the order of the day. As to a cardinal's manners, I can only say, that in the person of our entertainer, they were extremely simple and kind; it was as easy to converse with him as with your next neighbour. For the rest, a cardinal is one of a conclave of seventy, not always full, that elects the pope; is one of the pope's secret council; wears a red hat, rides in a red carriage, and has the liveries of his servants and of his horses of the same colour.

A cardinal is one of the pope's council, but I believe the prerogative is rather nominal. The pope is an absolute sovereign; and it is found quite impossible, I understand, to restrain the present pontiff in a course of expenses, that threaten the ruin, in temporal power, of the papal see. It is said that the annual expenses of the government now exceed the income, by about three millions of piastres. To meet this deficiency, the revenues from one village and district after another of the Roman state, are pledged away to the bankers from whom the money is borrowed, without any prospect of redemption; and I am told that ten or twelve years of extravagance like this, must leave the papal exchequer in a state of complete bankruptcy.

It might be inferred from this, perhaps, that Gregory XVI. is a very ambitious pontiff. Yet he affects very little state; is not disposed to exact observance, and brings his personal and household expenses within the most moderate allowance. He was formerly rector of the Propaganda; and the students of that institution tell me, that when they are admitted to audience, he often tells them that he is tired of worldly care and grandeur, and wishes that he could be their rector again.

But with all this simplicity about the world, I suspect that he has a great deal of spiritual ambition. One or two circumstances will illustrate this. He wrote a book before his elevation to the popedom, which gained little or no attention. He has since caused this work to be published in every form, from the folio to a small pocket volume. St. Paul's Cathedral, a mile and a half out of the walls, was once built, I suppose, in the midst of a populous neighbourhood. A few years ago it was destroyed by fire. The pope is now rebuilding it, at an immense expense,* in what is nearly a waste field; and for no ostensible reason that I can see, but that he may, by and bye, write upon its pediment "Gregorius XVI. ædificavit hanc basilicam."

January 3.—These two days past I have taken walks out of the walls. One of them was to the church of St. Lorenzo, a strange old building, on the site and partly of the materials of an ancient temple; with an old mosaic pavement; with pillars of all sizes, cut off and fitted in, with most admired incongruity; but especially with a colonnade about the high altar, of most magnificent fluted Corinthian pillars of Parian marble. By the bye, the number of ancient pillars now standing in Rome, and mostly in the churches, is immensely great. I have seen it stated, I think, somewhere, at sixteen thousand.

To-day, I went without the wall, on the west side of the city, and found a variegated and picturesque country. What a glorious spot this

* The columns in this cathedral are single shafts of granite, polished to the smoothness of marble.

must have been, when the malaria was not here; nor had misrule, misery, poverty, degradation, fallen here, with the weight of a thousand curses. The whole Campagna, stretching to the sea on one side, and to the mountains on the other, was filled, was almost swarming with dwellings, many of them the villas of wealthy and noble Romans—for these all lived, or had villas out of the city; Rome and its neighbourhood was filled with temples, baths, forums, arches, columns, colonnades, statues; and it was Rome, the sovereign queen of nations, the mistress of the world. She was the central point, from which radiating lines went out through all the earth. On those diverging courses, consuls and generals went forth to command provinces, or to conquer new nations; upon them, they returned, to celebrate, in solemn procession, their triumphs; upon these great ways of empire, ambassadors travelled in state, to give law, and couriers came back to bring intelligence; and now, so secluded, so solitary among the nations is Rome, that one of our party, in writing a letter to-day, inadvertently said, "We are as much *out of the world* here, as if we were in the moon."

In coming into the city, we passed by the magnificent fountain of St. Paul's, and visited the church of San Pietro in Montorio—the spot assigned by tradition for St. Peter's martyrdom. There is a little circular temple, separate from the church, erected on the particular spot where the cross on which he suffered martyrdom is supposed to have stood; with an upper and lower, or subterranean chapel. It is surrounded by pillars of very dark—or, as they say in the books, black granite, and is a beautiful object.

Among the most beautiful things in Rome are its fountains, and among the most striking things are its obelisks.

The fountains in front of St. Peter's especially, are really glorious. They rise thirty or forty feet into the air, and come down in a shower. The quantity of water thrown up is so great, and the streams, as they spring out from the basin, are made so to diverge, that they present the appearance of two trees, one on each side of the piazza. The fountains are partly resolved into drops and mist, and a rainbow may always be seen in the direction opposite to the sun. Every time one sees them, they seem a new mystery and beauty; and when the sky is so fair, so glorious a thing, that you feel almost (as you do some days) as if you could kneel down and worship it, they appear like a cloud of incense—pure, bright, resplendent—offered up to that supernal splendour and purity.

As to these Egyptian obelisks, of polished granite, pointing up to the sky from almost every square and open space in Rome, and with that hand-writing of mysterious and yet unexplained characters upon their sides—what could be more striking? The antiquities of Rome are *young*, by their side. Some of them were built by Sesostris, by Rameses, between three and four thousand years ago. They saw ages of empire and of glory before Rome had a being. They are also in the most perfect preservation. So beautifully polished, and entirely free from stain, untouched by the storms of thirty-five centuries, it seems as if they had not lost one of their particles, since they came from the quarries of Egypt. That very surface, we know, has been gazed upon by the eyes of a hundred successive generations. Speak, dread monitors! as ye point upward to Heaven—speak, dark hieroglyphic

symbols! and tell us—are ye not yet *conscious*, when conscious life has been flowing around you for three thousand years? Methinks it were enough to penetrate the bosom of granite with emotion, to have witnessed what you have witnessed. Methinks that the stern and inexorable mystery, graven upon your mighty shafts, must break silence, to tell that which it hath known of weal and woe, of change, disaster, blood, and crime!

CHAPTER XX.

ST. PETER'S—ITS MAGNITUDE AND SPLENDOUR—MONUMENT TO THE LAST OF THE STUARTS—MOSAIC COPIES OF PAINTINGS—A WALK IN ST. PETER'S—SERVICES IN THE CHAPEL OF THE PROPAGANDA—LIBRARY OF THE VATICAN—ROMAN MARIONETTES—CHURCHES BUILT ON THE BATHS OF DIOCLETIAN—EPIPHANY CELEBRATION IN THE PROPAGANDA—ST. ONOFRIO—CARDINAL FESCH'S GALLERY OF PAINTINGS—ACADEMY OF ST. LUKE—SERVICE AT THE CHURCH OF ST. MARCELLUS—BLESSING THE HORSES—MOSAIC MANUFACTORY IN THE BASEMENT OF THE VATICAN—CHURCHES OF ROME.

I wish to convey to you *some* idea of St. Peter's—of its magnitude, at least, though I cannot of its magnificence.

But one word, first, in abatement. Though St. Peter's is the largest, and far the most expensive structure in the world, it fails entirely in its exterior appearance to make any just impression as a piece of architecture. It fails from two causes. First, because the front is mean, and totally unworthy of such an edifice. It ought to have had a stupendous portico, according to Michael Angelo's plan. And secondly, because it is hemmed in on each side by other buildings—the Vatican on its left, and the Baptistary and other buildings on the right—so that from no proper point of view can this mighty structure be seen. The first fault is owing to a want of means, and therefore not to be blamed; but the last is an unaccountable, an almost incredible fault in the original plan of this vast structure. Surely there is waste land enough in Rome, and has been for ages, to open a view to the most magnificent temple in the world. Why was it made thus vast, but to produce an impression by its size, and especially by its exterior appearance? Why, but for this, have such millions upon millions, untold, and unknown, and incalculable, almost to the ruin of the papal see, been expended upon it? And yet St. Peter's, as an exterior building, *is not seen!*

But now let us, crossing the area of its noble piazza—eleven thousand and fifty-five feet long, or ten acres* in extent probably—surrounded by its circular colonnade, contemplate the great object itself.

Its front is one hundred and sixty feet high, and three hundred and ninety-six feet wide—that is, twenty-four rods—the thirteenth of a mile. It is six hundred and seventy-three feet—forty rods*—long,

* I add these denominations as conveying the most palpable ideas probably to people in the country.

and four hundred and forty-four feet—twenty-seven rods—at the transept, or widest part; that is to say, it covers about seven acres.

With these general ideas of the building let us enter it. But you say at once, "It does not appear so extraordinarily large." True; that is because the proportions are so perfect, it is commonly said; but I think it is yet more, because we have never seen any building so large, and the visual impression is affected in its estimate by what we *have* seen. But we soon learn to correct this impression. We immediately observe, on the right and left of the door, statues apparently of children—cherubs—that sustain marble vases of holy water. We approach them, and find that they are giants, more than six feet high. We see at a little distance, on the pilasters and just above the pedestal, sculptured doves—the emblematic genii of the place—and they appear to the eye of no very extraordinary size, and we think that we can easily lay our hand on them. We approach, and find that we can scarcely reach to touch them, and they are eighteen inches or two feet long. We advance along the mighty central nave, and we see, nearly at the termination of it and beneath the dome, the high altar, surmounted by a canopy, raised on four twisted pillars of bronze. The pillars and canopy seem to be of very suitable elevation for the place, and yet we soon learn that they are ninety feet high.

I have before spoken of the size of the dome, with its walls twenty-three feet thick, its own height one hundred and seventy-nine feet, and itself raised two hundred and seventy-seven feet above the floor of the church. This dome is sustained by four square pillars, two hundred and twenty-three feet in circumference. That is to say, each one of these pillars, or masses of masonry, is nearly sixty feet on each side, and therefore as large as one of our common-sized churches, if it were raised up and set on the end. There is a small church and an adjoining house on the Strada Felice in Rome, designedly built so as to be together equal to the size of one of these columns. And yet these columns do not seem to be in the way at all; they do not seem to occupy any disproportionate space; they do not encumber the mighty pavement!

With regard to the objects within St. Peter's, I can notice only two or three that struck me most.

One of them is the monument to the last of the Stuarts, Charles Edward, and his brother Henry, the cardinal. There are two angels of death—it is the work of Canova—before which I have spent hours. So exquisitely moulded are their forms, so delicate, thoughtful, beautiful are their faces, so sad, too, as they are about to extinguish the torch of life—as they stand leaning their cheeks upon the reverse end of the long, slender stem—so sad, indeed, but then that sadness so relieved by beauty,—intellectual, contemplative, winning beauty—it seems to my fancy, at times, as if they would certainly appear to me at my own death; as if they would flit before the—perhaps failing—perhaps delirous—imagination, and reconcile the soul to a departure effected by a ministry so beautiful. Ah! blessed angels! I may one day stretch out my hands to you, and ask your aid—but not yet—not yet. But sickness, sorrow, deprivation, calamity in some shape, may make you welcome, before one thinks to be ready.

Among the mosaic copies of paintings in which St. Peter's is so rich,

there is one of the Incredulity of Thomas, which has always made one of my stopping-places, in taking the customary circuit. The eagerness of Thomas, the calm dignity of Jesus are fine; but the face of John, as he stands just behind Thomas, and looks upon his rash act, is one to remember always. It seems to me the very personification of forbearance. He submits calmly that Thomas should do it—should satisfy himself—but yet he is exceedingly sorrowful. There is no surprise in his countenance; he knows human frailty; he is not astonished at unbelief or hardness of heart; but it seems, at the same time, as if his own heart were broken at the spectacle. There is not the slightest rebuke in his beautiful countenance; but such a union of indulgence and sorrow, as one might well pray for, at that altar—(it is an altar-piece)—to be awakened in *his* mind when he stands by the evil and erring.

A walk in St. Peter's is something by itself—a thing not to be had, nor anything like it, anywhere else in the world. The immensity of the place; its immense, unequalled magnificence; the charming temperature of the air, preserved the same the year round by the vastness of the mass of masonry; the incense-breathing walls—for there is literally an odour of sanctity always here, from the daily burning of incense; the rich, beautiful, variegated marble columns; the altars, the tombs on every side, the statues, the paintings, the fine medallions in marble, of the heads of saints and fathers of the church, which are set into the sides of the columns in great numbers; then the arches on arches that present themselves to the view in every direction; and, if the walk be towards evening (the only right time), the music of the vesper hymn, now swelling in full chorus upon the ear, and then dying away, as the music changes, or the walk leads you near the chapel whence it proceeds, or farther from it; all this, with the gathering shadows of approaching evening—the shadows slowly gathering in arch and dome—makes a walk in St. Peter's like nothing else!

January 8.—I was present at the celebration of high mass in the chapel of the Propaganda, a few days since, and, for the first time in Rome, was gratified with an air of deliberation, dignity, and something like delicacy, given to the performance of this rite. The principal person officiating was the Bishop of the Sandwich Islands, lately ordained, and soon to depart for his distant home. The students of the Propaganda were all dressed in white tunics, and their singing, and their decorous behaviour, as well as that of all the officiating persons, who, instead of hurrying through the liturgy with indecent haste, repeated it slowly, and, instead of bowing and dodging about the altar, really kneeled—all this made it a very beautiful service.

In the morning of the same day, there were common masses said in the chapel, in various languages. It was very striking to see, in succession, the bearded Greek, the black Ethiop, and the swarthy Armenian, officiating as priests at the altar; and some of the persons kneeling around the altars—monks, I presume, from the East—looked like the very personifications of oriental maceration.

There is something very imposing in this gathering of all nations into one fold. Fifty languages are read in the Propaganda. One of the things at St. Peter's that makes you feel the majesty of this system is, that there are confessionals at St. Peter's for almost all nations, in their respective languages.

January 10.—We went to-day with the rector and some of the students of the Propaganda, through the Vatican library. We were received by M. Mezzofanti, who has immediate charge of the library, an aged and very learned man, who speaks forty-two languages — himself, therefore, to me, the greatest wonder in the library. He showed us some very old manuscripts, a Virgil and a Terence, each of the fifth century; a most splendid manuscript of Dante on vellum, beautifully illuminated and painted; and some curious autograph letters from Henry VIII. to Anne Boleyn.

Afterward we were shown a large cabinet of curiosities taken from ancient churches, and from the catacombs, consisting of instruments of torture, antique lamps, bronze crosses, and silver chalices. They were chiefly from the catacombs. Upon these objects, the eyes of the persecuted and devoted company, in caves and dens of the earth, had rested; with what emotions, how little are we able to comprehend!

January 11.—Really, the Roman marionettes, alias puppets, which we have been to see this evening, are worth a description. They are of the size of grown men and women, and they are made to perform an entire play and ballet. The dialogue is read by persons out of sight at the sides of the stage, while the puppets "suit the action to the word" with such propriety and grace as are perfectly surprising. There are few speakers who might not take lessons from their gestures. Then the ballet was performed almost with the skill and accuracy of opera dancers. But that the strings by which they are suspended and moved are too much in sight, one might scarcely suspect, in looking at these curious and amusing performers, that they were not real persons.

January 12.—To-day (Sunday) I have been wandering among the churches. First, to the Church of S. Maria di Vittoria, opposite the Fontana di Termine. In this church is the celebrated statue of St. Cecilia about to be pierced by the dart of the angel of death, by Bernini; but I have nothing special to say about it. Next, to the neighbouring churches, built on the Baths of Diocletian. One of these, the S. Maria degli Angeli, is in the form of a Greek cross,* and, in its proportions, pleases me more than any church in Rome, and is, besides, a splendid structure. I have visited it many times since I have been here, and it was with quite a sadness of spirit that I took my last look at it to-day. In the Church of St. Bernardo, at the other end, and on the foundation of the Baths of Diocletian, there was a celebration of the mass this morning; and to think, that on this very building, once devoted to the pleasures of a pagan emperor — on this very spot, where were martyred, in cold and wanton cruelty, the forty thousand Christian slaves who had built this immense edifice† — that here a Christian service was chanted, by many voices, and the pealing organ, and every solemn ceremonial, was enough to make the service interesting and touching, even if it had not been well performed — which, for once, it was. Afterward I passed through S. Maria Maggiore, to bid it adieu, with its splendid chapels and its beautiful ranges of Ionic pillars.

* That is, where both naves are of equal length, and not like the Latin cross, where they are unequal.

† The Baths of Diocletian, the largest in ancient Rome, were more than one thousand feet square; that is, they covered about twenty-five acres.

This afternoon I attended a singular exhibition at the Propaganda. It is a sort of Epiphany celebration, and consists in recitations in a great number of languages. On this occasion, the languages spoken were thirty-seven in number. Our own language had a very good representative, especially as to the manner of speaking (which was the best on the boards), in a young American from Philadelphia, and we gave him a good round clap for it. It was amusing to see how the spectators from different countries clapped, as their various languages were pronounced; but it was especially striking to observe how the feelings of the whole audience took part with a black Ethiop boy, and gave him, evidently on that account alone, a far heartier reception than to any other.

January 13.—I have been to-day to visit the tomb of Tasso, at the Church of St. Onofrio, on the west side of the Tiber. The church has a beautiful and commanding situation on the brow of Mount Janiculus, a range of hill that runs along the west side of the city. In the convent which joins the church, Tasso spent his last days, and there died. There is a pleasant piazza or corridor in front of the convent, and the spot itself is retired and delightful. Tasso had come to Rome to receive the highest honour which was left in the hands of the former mistress of the world to confer—the poet's coronation in the Capitol. The ceremony was deferred till spring, in order to give it the greater splendour. But he grew more ill in the winter; caused himself to be carried to St. Onofrio; and died the very day on which he was to have been crowned!

January 15.—The great business of to-day has been to visit the gallery of paintings at the palace of Cardinal Fesch, and it is very rich. There are a number of

Rembrants—portraits, with that wonderfully natural countenance, and especially that living eye, in which, I am tempted to say, he surpasses all other painters. Also

A Correggio: A Descent from the Cross; with the soft golden light—light rather than colouring—which, I believe, characterizes his pictures. The descent here is effected by the ministry of angels; and the conception appears to me to be beautiful. But the best piece of all is

A Raphael Mengs: Semiramis at her Toilet—an exquisitely delicate and lovely countenance. I have seen nothing of Mengs that was not very fine.

Teniers: a great many of his small, graphic, almost unequalled paintings, in humble and grotesque life.

Some exquisite small pieces on copper; churches, chapels, with admirable perspective.

Some capital landscapes by Wouvermans.

January 16.—The Academy of St. Luke, where I have been to-day, is worth a visit. Raphael's St. Luke painting the Virgin, is considered the principal object, and it is not unworthy of Raphael. The difference between inspiration in a revery, and inspiration engaged in a fixed effort, is finely marked in the countenance of Luke. There is a sort of fixed compression about the lips, such as I have seen in an artist in the act of painting; and yet the eye is full of inspiration. There are in this academy a number of beautiful small *premium* casts, and some delightful portraits.

After this I went through the Forum, along the ruins of the Palatine, and to the top of the Coliseum, and took my last melancholy look at these melancholy objects.

On coming home through the Corso, I observed a collection of carriages about the Church of St. Marcellus, and on going in, found the church lighted up—it was just at evening—with ten or twelve chandeliers, and a great number of wax candles, creating a splendid illumination. It was dressed out with the usual decorations of a festa—curtains hanging in festoons before the altars, &c.—filled with a crowd of people, and filled, too, with glorious music. This—I mean music, not always glorious music, however—is the principal part of all celebrations of saints' days, &c. The present ceremonies, I learned, were for St. Marcellus's day. The music was sustained by the organ, a band of performers on instruments playing with rare delicacy and fine execution, and an immense choir, some of them singing with that wonderful combination of high falsetto, running almost beyond the power of a woman's voice, yet without any of its shrillness, which is scarcely ever attained, unless where the physical nature is sacrificed to it. For my part, I go heartily along with these celebrations, and wish that such were introduced into our Protestant churches.

January 17.—I went to-day to the piazza before S. Maria Maggiore, to witness the singular ceremony of *blessing the horses*. The day is called St. Anthony's day. The ceremony is simply this: Carriage after carriage drives up before a chapel—so it was while I stood to observe it—a priest comes forth dressed in his robes, and, after uttering prayers or benedictions (I know not which—nobody can know what a priest says, unless he knows it beforehand), he takes a brush, and dipping it in the vase of holy water at the door of the chapel, sprinkles it over the horses.

January 19.—We went to see the mosaic manufactory, in the basement story of the Vatican. Camuccini's painting of the Incredulity of St. Thomas is there; and it is a curious fact, that it is not equal to the mosaic of the same painting in St. Peter's. This mosaic work is quite wonderful, for it comes very near to the perfection of painting. The mode is, to have a strong frame of iron, on which is spread an amalgam, and into this amalgam are set the stones which form the mosaic. These stones, by the bye, are themselves manufactured. They are a sort of vitrified substance, made of any given colour by certain exact proportions of the necessary ingredients—the receipt for each one being recorded in a mammoth volume lying upon the table. It astonished me to find, deposited and numbered, in the immense repository of this establishment, eighteen thousand different shades of colouring.

January 20.—I do not know that I can take a more appropriate leave of Rome, than by a notice of its churches. Nothing in Rome has astonished me so much. The works of art have, if anything, fallen short of my expectations; that is, as a mass—some things cannot disappoint. The ruins, with the exception of the Coliseum, certainly have. They are mostly brick ruins; and a brick ruin is the least interesting of all remains. And the churches, I acknowledge, have very little in their architecture or exterior appearance to recommend them. The front is frequently nothing but a dead brick wall. However, it has one recommendation; it is a complete protection against street noises.

So that you pass at once from the bustling city into the deepest seclusion.

There are three hundred and fifty churches in Rome: and any one of an hundred of them is such a wonder and beauty, as, placed in America, would draw visiters from all parts of the country. I speak now exclusively of the interior. The entire interior walls of many of these churches are clothed with polished, antique marble. They are hung around with paintings; and filled with marble pillars, statues, tombs, and altars. These altars, built often of jasper, porphyry, and the most precious ancient marbles, are commonly placed in recesses or chapels on each side of the church, so that they offer some retirement to the votary.

I confess that I seldom enter these churches without an impulse to go and kneel at some of the altars. ——— and ——— both agree with me in this. We have often said, that if it were not for the air of pretension it would have to any of our acquaintances who might chance to pass, we certainly should do it. As we were walking in St. Peter's to-day, ——— said, "It does not signify, I do wish, in serious earnest, that I could be a Catholic." My own feeling is—and in this we agreed—that if it were not for the faith, I should like many of the forms very well. These ever-open churches, these ever-ascending prayers, the deep seclusion and silence, "the dim religious light," the voices of morning mass or vesper hymn, the sacred themes depicted upon every wall and dome, and again and evermore, these holy altars, whose steps have been worn by the knees of the pilgrims of ages past—all these things commend themselves, not merely to the imagination, but to the most unaffected sentiments of devotion.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC SYSTEM.

On taking leave of Rome, I shall make it a text for some thoughts on the general subject of the Catholic religion.

Of a dispensation of Christianity, embracing more countries, and numbering more adherents than any other, it cannot be at any time unimportant or uninteresting, to form a correct judgment. But in addition to this, there are circumstances at the present moment, which give the subject a considerable prominence among those that invite the public attention. The old Protestant horror against Popery has been, for some time past, gradually dying away; and although circumstances have recently kindled up a temporary excitement on the subject, I think it cannot become general or lasting. The papal see has lost all political power and importance; it is fast parting with its revenues; it is annually alienating to bankers, parcel by parcel, the very patrimony of St. Peter's; it no longer gives any countenance to those worst corruptions which brought on the Protestant Reformation; and if it has

not altogether withdrawn its sanction from the Inquisition, it no longer encourages the application of those tortures, which, when they were first unveiled to the knowledge of mankind, sent a groan of sympathizing horror through the world. Then, with regard to the prophecies concerning Popery, a feeling is prevailing in the world, that their doom is at length fulfilled, in the annihilation of that gigantic and overshadowing despotism. The foot of Rome is no longer on the neck of kings; on the contrary, its very head is bowed to the dust, before a power that it once commanded. Nothing could be more deplorable than its condition. The vials of wrath are indeed poured out upon the very seat and throne of the papal hierarchy; the nobles of the land are reduced to poverty, and the poor of the land to beggary; its fields, its plains, once cultivated like a garden, and covered with villas, now lie waste, dispeopled, desolate, under the pestilential breath of the malaria; its villages are falling into ruins; the moment you cross the boundary line, you recognise the places that belong to the patrimony of the church, by their utter misery.

These circumstances of the religion, at its very fountain head, must satisfy, it would seem, the most confident denouncer or interpreter of Heaven's judgments upon Popery; they present a combination of evils, calamities, and woes, which cannot fall much short of a fulfilment of all the maledictions that can have been found or fancied to exist in the prophecies. At the same time a profounder study of Scripture has had the effect to bring some doubt upon those exact constructions, by which numbers, and dates, and persons, and places, and events, have been so particularly laid down in the chart of the expositor. So that, on the whole, there is a large and increasing number of Protestants, who do not feel at liberty to pursue, with pity or horror, the Catholic of these days, as if he were a mark for the displeasure of Heaven. The consequence is, that the Catholics are coming, with many, to take their place among Christian sects, and to be judged of with that degree of candour, limited enough, indeed, which differing sects are accustomed to deal out to one another.

Another circumstance which invites attention to this subject is, that the Catholic religion seems, at this moment, to be making some progress in the world. It is, indeed, a singular fact, that, at this very moment, when the religion is dying at its heart, it is flourishing in its members. It has made some distinguished converts in Germany within a few years past; it is gaining rather than losing credit and influence in Great Britain; and it is said to be gaining numbers in America. A good deal of apprehension, it is well known, has been felt by some classes of Christians among us, concerning this spread of the Catholic faith in the United States. The great effort made in the Atlantic states, to establish Sunday Schools in the Valley of the Mississippi, sprung, no doubt, from this apprehension. It has overrated, I have no doubt, both the means of the Catholics and their increase. The increase has been occasioned by emigration, and therefore is no increase; or by the natural growth of population, and therefore is no evidence of progress. Of actual conversions to Popery, I imagine there are very few in our country, for it is not a country to favour them: and even if there were more than there are, or are alleged to be, I still should not partake of the general alarm, because I believe there is a

spirit in our institutions which will sooner or later control the power, and correct the errors, of every sect. There may be a sect in our country, and a large and flourishing sect, denominated the Catholic; but it is not, and never can be, the despotic institution that it has been in other countries. Its power over its own members must constantly decline. Then, as to its means for propagating its faith, the report of immense appropriations for this purpose, by the mother church, was never anything, I believe, but rumour; it is not of a nature to be verified: and the exchequer of Rome is too poor to give any colour of probability to the statement.

The growing candour, then, of the Protestant world, and the growing strength of the Catholic interest, have both prepared the public mind, and pressed it, to examine the claims of this form of Christianity. And I mean now its claims, not to infallibility, not to supremacy, not to being, in preference to any other form of Christianity, a Heaven-appointed institution — claims, which the Protestant world is scarcely disposed to consider — but its claims, in common with other modes of church order, ritual, and usage, and other means of spiritual influence and practical virtue, to the common respect and sympathy of Christians. It has peculiar usages; and it sets up pretensions to peculiar virtue — to a virtue that springs exclusively from its own system. This last, too, is a point which has made an impression on the minds of some good Protestants; and it is, moreover, and most truly, the most interesting point of inquiry that could arise between the two parties. For if there be something in the Catholic system, or some divine influence especially connected with it, which produces a virtue superior to all other virtues — if this be really and undoubtedly so — why, truly we have nothing to do but to return as fast as we can to the bosom of the ancient mother church.

Now, this is precisely what many Catholics allege, and some Protestants seem disposed to admit. I do not say that this admission has been public, or has appeared in any writings; but I have observed in conversation, and I think others must have observed, a growing disposition to do justice, and, as I conceive, more than justice, to the virtues of the Catholics. It is, in part, a reaction, no doubt, from the old severity; but I think it arises, in part, from a neglect to make the proper discriminations.

But what are the virtues, in whose behalf this claim of superiority is set up? They may be stated to be generally, the virtues of devotees, and of the religious orders. Where, it is said, is there anything like the virtue of the Sisters of Charity, a society of females, composed partly of the high-born and wealthy, partly of the young and beautiful — whose members devote themselves to the humblest offices, in hospitals and almshouses, without remuneration and without fame? So, again, if the traveller finds himself upon some lonely desert, or upon some almost inaccessible mountain, where he is liable to be overwhelmed by the sands of Africa, or the snows of Switzerland — if, I say, the traveller finds in either spot a house of refuge, and good people living there on purpose to rescue him, the house of refuge, it is likely, he will discover to be a monastery, of the order of St. Benedict, or St. Augustine. What hosts of missionaries, again it is said, has the Catholic church sent out into all parts of the world — compared with which, the company

of Protestant missionaries is a mere handful. And not like Protestant missionaries have they gone out, carrying home and household gods with them, but alone have they gone and lived among the heathen in their families, and learned their manners, and thus gained over them the greatest influence. And what, it is said still further, what are all Catholic priests but missionaries in a sort, subject to the absolute command of their superiors, going far or near, without hesitation or question, as the interest of the church requires—going alone through life, without domestic endearments, without home, without those first gratifications of the heart which all other men demand as their right? How often, too—and this is the physician's testimony—how often is the Catholic priest found by the beds of the dying, spending hours, sometimes days and nights there, that he may administer the last rites of his religion.

Far be it from me to detract anything from real merit—far be it from me to detract anything from its just measure and its full desert, wherever it may be found. Nay, not to detract from it is little. To acknowledge virtue, to enjoy it, to delight in it, to bless, to cherish it as the richest treasure of the world—let me tread what land I may, Catholic or Protestant—let me dwell in Rome or in Geneva—this is the spirit in which I would see mankind everywhere. That there are virtues among the Catholics which deserve to be thus regarded, I have no doubt. But it does not follow that they are superior to the virtues of all other Christians. And since this is an inference which some are disposed to think very plausible from the facts, I shall turn from the pleasure of beholding and admiring the virtues of my Catholic brethren, to the duty, much less agreeable certainly, of making some strictures upon them. And I confess that my doubts about the Catholic claim of superior virtue, fixes upon the very point where its main stress is laid—its peculiarity—its extraordinariness. I do not know that Catholics say, or that anybody else says, that they are better men than others in the ordinary duties and relations of life. But the point that has been pressed upon me in the colleges of Rome, and that is put forward elsewhere is, that the special services of religion are more faithfully attended upon by Catholics, that extraordinary sacrifices and enterprises are more common among them; that no other church can show religious orders devoted to charity and prayer. Nay, it is so arranged among the different religious orders, that prayers shall never cease—some rising in the night watches to continue them, so that the devotions of the church may be uninterrupted and perpetual. This, then, is the case; and I frankly say that I do not like the aspect of it. It is not well or safe for any sect to take this ground. The stress laid here is the grand error, as it seems to me of the Catholic system, considered as a religious system.

The most remarkable thing about Christian virtue, whether we see it in the precept or the example of its great Teacher, is its fair order, its full proportion, its easy adaptation to all circumstances, its fidelity to all relations and trusts, in fine, its simplicity, consistency, and universality. It is always doing good. It is always speaking, it is always acting, rightly. It is so constantly manifesting itself, as scarcely to attract any notice. This even and unvarying tenour of a good life has not the splendour, the glare that belongs to some one department of

benevolent exertion; it does not, therefore, draw as much observation upon it; it is not so much admired; but we read, that "the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation." That calm, equal, silent restraint laid upon the passions; that habitual self-controul and devotion, by which ambition, pride, conceit, selfishness, sensuality, are all kept down, and the whole character is subdued to meekness, forbearance, and tenderness; let no man doubt that the time may come, when far-famed philanthropy, and flaming martyrdom, and maceration, and fasting, and prayer, and every canonized virtue, will fall far behind it. The worth of these virtues I do not deny. I only deny their claim to superior worth. I deny that they are likely to be superior. Nay, I contend that extraordinary virtues are very liable to be partial and defective—that they are very liable to pay some of the penalties that usually attach to what is extraordinary in character. How often is great zeal for religion deformed by passion; much praying connected with much peevishness; great sanctity marred by equal pride, and singular philanthropy tainted by vanity and affectation!

I distrust, therefore, the claim of the Catholic to superior virtue, precisely because he puts that claim upon extraordinary ground—upon ground removed from the ordinary path of life. And certainly I distrust all similar pretensions set up by Protestant sects, for the same reason. It is surprising to observe what stress is laid, in Catholic discourses, upon the single virtue of almsgiving. It seems to be enforced, almost as if it were a substitute for all other virtues, as if it covered a multitude of sins; and I fear it is often practised with a view to its answering both purposes. It is said that mendicants throng the church doors, in Catholic countries, in confident reliance upon this well-known fact—that good Catholics often leave their dwellings to attend church, with a vow on their own part, or an injunction from their confessor, to bestow charity, right or wrong, with cause or without, on somebody. Now, surely the real question about virtue is, not whether a man does one thing well, but whether he doeth all things well; not whether he is a good devotee, but whether he is a good and devoted man in every relation and situation; not whether there are some good and self-denying monks and priests in Catholic countries, but whether the whole population of those countries is singularly self-denying, and virtuous. Nay, he who shuts himself up in peculiarity, whether Judaical, Popish, Protestant, or Puritanical, so far cuts himself off from the means and opportunities of a noble and generous virtue. He who selects a particular sphere of operation, and sums up all his virtue in that, as also he who retires to a monastery, flies from the great conflict of life, from the battle-field of virtue—flies, I say, from the very field where the most glorious deeds are to be done, and the most glorious victories are to be gained. And it is absurd for him, or his friends for him, to demand admiration; he ought to be content, if he can escape censure: it is as absurd for him to challenge admiration, as it would be for him who fled before his country's enemies, to lay claim to similar homage.

In fact, I must ask, whether these vaunted virtues of Catholic piety, are not very apt to be factitious? Suppose, for instance, that a man should do a right action, under the fear of instant death for disobedience, or in the certain hope of heaven, as the reward of his fidelity in

this single instance. The virtue, in such a case, if it could be called virtue at all, would be extremely factitious; the fear would not leave the mind its moral freedom; the hope would bring a sort of hallucination over the moral faculties; the state of such a mind would be altogether unnatural; the virtue would be artificial. Now, the principles illustrated in this extreme case, seem to me to be applicable, to a certain extent, to the devotees of the Catholic church. It is common in the teachings of that church to make a wide distinction—a distinction, wide almost as that between salvation and perdition—between society and solitude; between the world and seclusion from the world; between the ordinary ties of life, and the peculiar relationship of a religious order. Is it strange, then, or does it imply any great virtue, that a young person, under the influence of venerated superiors, and persuaded, that to remain in the world is almost certain perdition, should rush into the order of the Sisters of Charity, or into a monastery, where all is safety, and certainty of the bliss of heaven? How many are there among *us*, who would freely give up their entire fortunes for the certainty of being happy for ever! So, also, for the protracted attendance of the Catholic priest at the deathbed, there is a motive, which may be termed a violent motive, and which, if it were admitted among us, would just as certainly carry every Protestant clergyman to the same place. That is to say, the Catholic priest believes that the future state of the departed soul much depends on these last ceremonies. It would be the most unparalleled cruelty, therefore, for him to fail of his attendance. The truth is, and so it deserves to be stated, that instead of its being any great merit or fidelity in him to be present, he would be a monster if he could fail.

The claims of the Catholic priesthood to admiration, on other grounds, I would willingly be excused from discussing; since it is scarcely possible to discuss them with decorum and courtesy. I speak now of the priests in Europe, and especially in Italy, and I would not allude even to them, if it were not that their virtues are often urged upon our notice by their admirers, in contrast with the indulgences and luxuries of the Protestant clergy. I am the more unwilling to say a word on the subject—the alleged self-denials and stoic virtues of the Catholic clergy—because I know, and gladly admit that, notwithstanding all the dangers of their position, there are many individuals among them of the greatest purity and dignity of character. But surely he who should contend that their peculiar situation—their seclusion, that is to say, from domestic companionship and intercourse, is, or is found to be, favourable to the purity of their lives, or the refinement of their manners, could do so only in total ignorance, both of the weak and the strong points of his cause. Let him descant as much at large as he pleases upon the holy antiquity and the beautiful services of his church, but with the knowledge of what exists in the oldest and most venerated abodes of that church, let him say as little as possible of the self-denials of the Catholic priesthood.

The truth is, that the great charm of the Catholic system to many—and not a few Protestants are Catholics in this respect—is, that it offers to them a course of specific and definite services and exercises, instead of the great, general, and indefinite task of virtue. In religion, multitudes choose what they consider to be safe bondage, in preference

to dangerous freedom. The Catholic — I except, of course, many enlightened persons of that class from the remark — but in general, the Catholic has a monitor in his priest, ever at his side, to say, "Do this," and "Do that." He is left to struggle with no questions or doubts of any kind, and thus, as it seems to me, is taken out of the hands of the true spiritual discipline. He has his religious duties exactly weighed out to him, and if in any point he fails, if virtue sink in the scale, he has penances and absolutions to restore the balance. Thus all is measured, and made exact and definite; more definite, I believe, than suits the discipline of virtue. Thus all is plain and easy; no questions about faith; no doubts about duty; to obey, not to inquire, is the grand requisition; docility, submission, are the characteristic virtues of the Catholic system. The effect upon the ignorant is likely to be mental slavery and superstition; upon the enlightened, it often is, I fear, to set religion apart from the free action of their own minds, into the care of the priesthood; or to resolve that which should be the constant nurture and food of life, into the temporary excitements and raptures of cathedral worship.

I am not now saying that the Catholics are worse than other Christians; I am only speaking of what seem to be the tendencies of the system, and I think I may, without any breach of comity or candour, do this, in reply to the assumptions of that church. It may be, that I do not, and cannot speak impartially on such a subject; but without intending any disrespect to the many enlightened and excellent men who belong to that communion, I will venture to say of the system, that it seems to be the childhood of Christianity, while Protestantism I consider to be its manhood. And although this manhood has its own peculiar exposures, yet for the same reason that I would advocate freedom in civil affairs, would I advocate freedom in religious affairs. The republicanism of Christianity is Protestantism.

I have thus been led, from conversation and observation, since I have been abroad, to put down some thoughts on the Catholic religion. But there is a question about the general sincerity and spirituality of Catholic devotions, which, I find, is oftener raised in Protestant countries than any other, concerning the religion, and to which, therefore, I will attempt to give a brief answer. The religious services of the Catholics in their churches are commonly thought, among us, to be such as are enforced by their superiors, or to be mere compliances with forms, held by them to be necessary; and, therefore, a doubt very naturally springs up, concerning both their sincerity and spirituality.

I can only say, with regard to the first, that there is every appearance among the attendants at their churches, of the profoundest reverence and sincerity. Besides the appointed services, there are many which are voluntary; and at every hour of the day, at morning, noon, and evening, he who enters the churches, especially of Italy, will find worshippers in greater or less number, kneeling before the altars, in silent devotion. If these services *be* abominations, as some good Protestants will have them to be, I could wish the manner of them, at least, in some Protestant churches that I have observed, were imitated. There are few spectacles more touching in the world, perhaps, than at early morning, ere the last veil of night has departed from the sanctuary, or in the evening twilight, when the first shadow of the coming

darkness has fallen upon the holy place, to behold, separately, silently kneeling upon the altar's steps, or the cold pavement, those who have seemed to seek the hour of seclusion from the world's great throng, to pour out their prayers and tears—to pour out their joys in gratitude, or their sorrows in submission, before Him, who hears the inaudible sigh, and understands the unuttered thought.

With regard to the charge of formality, I cannot help giving you the answer which I once received from a learned and distinguished ecclesiastic, leaving you to judge of it as you may. I had presented this charge of formality, not so much as my own, perhaps, as the common Protestant charge, and asked him what he would say to it. He said, in reply, "You have been in our churches; you have witnessed the continual resort to them; and I can inform you of what you may not have observed, that every morning, almost the entire population of Rome comes to mass; the whole body of labourers invariably attend the morning service, before they go to their employments: and yet there is no compulsion whatever in the case—it is purely voluntary. Does this, then," he said, "deserve to be called formality?" Nay, he went further, and, I confess, with some show of reason. "When I have been in Protestant countries," he said, "the thing that has struck me, has been the apparent absence, during six days of the week, of all religion. On the seventh, indeed, the people assemble in their churches, but it is by appointment, it is in compliance with custom; and if anything could seem like a forced and formal matter in religion, it would be this." Let Protestants see to it, I say, that the charge against them be not found true; and if they do not daily resort to some public altar, let them not fail of using equal endeavours to cultivate the spirit of devotion—let them beware lest they treat their religion as if they were ashamed of it—above all, let them carry the prayers of the heart into the practice of the life.

But my concern, at present, is with the Catholic religion. I am obliged to observe, that with this fair show of devotion in the churches, there is, in most Catholic countries, a striking and staggering incongruity in the morals of private life. Still I do not feel it necessary to brand those devotions with the charge of superstition or hypocrisy. The great evil in the Catholic religion—the great evil, I mean, which is exhibited in its practical results—is, that imagination and sentiment are substituted for real feeling and virtue. This, I should say, is the great evil in the present state of the religion; I do not say it was intended or is abetted; the stricture, I make only with the freedom and candour with which I should speak of any other form of Christianity. The defect, I think, has arisen from circumstances, as most defects in religious bodies arise. Those beautiful churches, on which the wealth of ages and empires has been lavished; those tombs and relics of saints and martyrs on every side; those pictures and statues, making every temple a sort of gallery of the arts; the processions, and rites, and memorials, marking almost every day in the year, and thus putting upon almost every otherwise common day the stamp of some venerable usage or holy recollection; the services of the church, too, so fitted, in the music, the responses, and the forms, and all this, too, amidst dimly burning tapers, and the voices of a strange and long since dead speech, and the varied and splendid costumes of the officiating priests—so

fitted to enchain and enchant the imagination: all this tends evidently to create a feeling about religion, akin to the feeling that is awakened by the arts — imaginative, superficial, transient; pleasing, perhaps, and even fervent for the time, but not operative, not effectual, not lasting. These cathedral influences tend to make a sort of cathedral religion, but not the religion of actual and active life; the religion of contemplation, and fancy, and revery, and sentiment, but not the religion of self-restraint, and of a strict conscience, and of a rigorous virtue. There are, however, forms and usages of the Catholic church, which seem to me not liable to all that objection which we Protestants are accustomed to bring against them.

The practice, for instance, of calling their churches by the name of some apostle, saint, or martyr, which has been considered superstitious by some Protestants, appears to me, not only free from objection, but to be very proper and desirable. It seems to me a kind of degradation to a temple of God to call it by the names of those persons who, from time to time, officiate in it. What would be more proper than that a church should bear onward from age to age the name of some noble sufferer in the cause of religion — of some heroic apostle of truth, or bright model of virtue! It would then be a kind of monument to that moral greatness which is taught within its walls.

One of the interesting services, indeed, in the Catholic calendar, consists of a periodical celebration, a kind of festival celebration, of the virtues or sufferings of the saint, or martyr, to whom any particular church is dedicated. There are prayers and thanksgivings appropriate to the occasion; there are anthems sung in commemoration of former days and deeds; the church is illuminated, and clothed with decorations to aid the effect; and everything is done — perhaps too much is done, to make the ceremony, as a ceremony, attractive to the people. However this may be, the service in its nature seems to me pertinent and interesting. If saints and martyrs have been held in too much reverence in former days, that seems scarce likely to be the fault of these times. While many things ancient and venerable are passing away, I would lay my hand on the records of ancient virtue and preserve them: I would spread that bright page before the people from time to time, and "give the sense, and cause them to understand the reading." The virtues of the world are the treasures of the world. I would enshrine them in sacred rites. I would embalm them, as many of the bones of saints actually are preserved in the very altars of the sanctuary. To contemplate virtue is the grand means of gaining virtue. To praise it, is to commend it to the respect of others. But we never contemplate it so feelingly, nor respect it so deeply, as when we behold it clothed with the beauty and power of example. Let then, I would say, not only goodness, but let good men be remembered in times, and seasons, and services devoted to that purpose. Let holy rites set forth—let holy words recount, their deeds and sufferings. Let their virtues be borne up on the breath of music, an offering, and a thanksgiving to Heaven.

And a festival, too, such as is observed in Catholic countries — a festival to commemorate, not one alone, but to commemorate *all saints* — a day to remember all good men — a season around which is gathered the mighty host of those who, in faith and patience, in suffering and triumph, have gone to heaven — this, I confess, strikes my mind as

something most meet, suitable, and grateful. Our Protestant religion is too naked of such associations. We are too reserved, I think, in expressing our regard towards *living* worth; we are not likely to give too much expansion and expression to our enthusiasm for the heroism and sanctity of former days. It teaches a needful lesson to those who are struggling against the tide of this world's temptations; it teaches a beautiful lesson to the young, the ardent aspirant after virtue — to know that the piety and fortitude which, in their day, were humble, and cast down, and fearful, and despised perhaps, have come to live, amidst anthem and prayer, in the memory of all generations.

CHAPTER XXII.

JOURNEY TO NAPLES — POSTING IN ITALY — BAY OF NAPLES — ROYAL MUSEUM — POZZUOLI AND BALE — VESUVIUS — HERCULANEUM — POMPEII — TOMB OF VIRGIL — CHURCHES IN NAPLES — CARNIVAL — LEGHORN — PISA — GENOA — GIULIO ROMANO'S MARTYRDOM OF ST. STEPHEN — POLITICAL STATE OF ITALY — ITALY THE LAND OF THE FINE ARTS — CULTIVATION AND PATRONAGE OF THE FINE ARTS IN AMERICA.

NAPLES, *January* 22. — I travelled post from Rome to Naples in thirty hours, not stopping except for the detentions and vexations occasioned by passports and custom-houses. We left Frascati, the ancient Tusculum, on the left, and passed through Mola di Gaeta; at both which places Cicero had villas. With these localities to bring him to mind — travelling on, or near roads which had so often resounded to his chariot wheels — travelling, too, over the Pontine marshes, in the vicinity of which he was put to death, it may be easily believed that it was his image that possessed my mind — his shade that seemed to flit before me, amidst the waning twilight and the bright moonbeams of the silent night. I saw him a proud and joyous traveller from the excitements, the studious toils, and the loud applauses of Rome, down to his country seats. Then I fancied him in these luxurious retreats, surrounded by friends, and engaged in high discourse. But a change came, and again I saw him — borne upon his litter with the steps of fear and flight. The assassins approach — (I looked, perhaps, upon the very field — a monument marks the spot, said to be the place of his death) — he commands the litter to be set down; he submits with calm, with Roman dignity to his fate; with word and with action more sublime, perhaps, than he ever used before, he bids them do their office. So, at least, would I think that a great man dies. For I cannot think that a great man ever died meanly, though in some moment of temptation, of vanity, or passion, he may have done meanly. Not that any act of his deserves to be so qualified; for I think that much injustice has been done him. His proconsulship in Cilicia was as magnanimous as his eloquence in Rome was unrivalled.

The style of posting in Italy, and, indeed, all over the Continent, would, if it were in America or in England, present a spectacle for the

whole generation of boys to hoot at. *Such* looking creatures as they often bring for horses; but yet more, such harness—ropes for traces, tow strings for buckles—and the horses so far apart that those before appear as if they were avant-couriers to those behind; and altogether, looking as if the first pull would snap everything asunder, and without any necromancy, resolve the generic substance, team, into the individual elements which compose it, and send the whole crazy collection of cattle to feeding in the pasture. It was with a good deal of this aspect of things that we set off last night, at midnight, with seven horses, and three postillions scolding, hurraing, and cracking their whips, as if *they* had no fear about the ropes, and were going to draw a barn. However, they whirled us away as if it had been the chariot of the fairies.

The approach towards Naples, for twenty or thirty miles, presents beautiful scenery, and the first of any considerable extent that I have seen in Italy; and Naples itself, with its environs, is a spot so delightful, that I wonder anybody who can get here stays in Rome or anywhere else, beyond the time necessary for sight-seeing. My window at the hotel commands the bay; and whether by the light of day or by moonlight, the scene is such, that my eyes are never sated with gazing upon it. By day, there is the far-extending and winding shore lined with villas and villages, the bold island of Capri at the mouth of the bay, and above its shore the Apennines rising in beautiful perspective, like an amphitheatre, yet irregular and picturesque; in the evening Vesuvius stands forth—an appalling object—to give the aid of contrast to the serenity and beauty of the scene—a red stream of lava pouring down its side, and accumulating, at the termination of its course, into a mass, a precipice of blackening cinders and interior fires—like a burning brow of wrath, frowning over the peaceful moonlit waters beneath.

January 24.—Within two days, I have been through the immense Royal Museum—a collection mostly of objects from Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Farnese. The objects are ancient paintings in fresco; Egyptian monuments, among which are four finely preserved mummies; the Farnesan Hercules, and the group of the Farnese Bull; statues in bronze, some of them capital; kitchen utensils, in which I saw everything *we* use, except the gridiron and the toasting-iron; a splendid collection of Etruscan vases, the papyruses from Herculaneum, &c.

January 25.—To-day I have been to Pozzuoli and Baiæ; both upon the bay. The ruins about Baiæ are of the most extraordinary character. For two or three miles, brick walls, arches, and staircases are seen jutting out in every direction from the steep hills along the shore. It seems as if some mighty hand had kneaded whole villages into the soil on which they stood; or as if the thunder of heaven had ploughed up the whole region, turning villas and palaces, like stubble, into its mighty furrow. And so it was; for here the earthquake and the volcano have been; and here were the villas, palaces, pleasure grounds, and baths of the early Roman emperors and their most distinguished subjects. The old Romans chose these shores as the seats of relaxation and enjoyment; Cicero had a villa upon the bay, just below Pozzuoli. I stood upon the site of it to-day; I heard the same wave break upon the shore that he heard; I stood beneath the precise point of the heavens where he stood; but now, time, and flood, and fire, have set such marks of desolation upon this whole shore, as would make the heart

sink to behold, even if they had not written destruction upon the very glory of the ancient world.

January 29.—I must take leave to be very statistical on two or three topics on which it would be very easy to be sentimental and romantic.

VESUVIUS.—The ascent, a part of it, is over fields of lava, black, rough, desolate, without a spire of grass, or a shrub, or anything that breathes of life. It is a stern and awful spectacle of destruction; it makes one's very nerves grow rigid to look upon it. The lava appears in every form—in streams, in ridges, and in shapeless masses—just as it was left by the tremendous element. I ascended to the highest point—the edge of the crater—sat down upon the very margin of the fiery cauldron, where, however, there was no fire now, but from the bottom of which there were several eruptions while I sat there, attended with a huge roaring almost as loud as thunder, and sending up showers of sand and stones, and shaking the earth on which I sat with very distinct *tremblemens de terre*. The guide took me to two places on the side of the mountain, where were openings, two feet in diameter, into the molten and fiery mass of lava. It was really fearful to look down into it. There it was, within two or three feet of you, a mass like molten iron, flowing down the side of the mountain; and yourself separated by a crust of lava, not more than a foot thick, perhaps, from the tremendous fires of Vesuvius!—fires that you had read of with a sort of dread and horror, at the distance of four thousand miles from them; fires that were burning, for aught you knew, to the centre of the earth. And here you stand directly over them, and feel their heat burning your very cheek! There was another opening where the hissing was so loud and sharp that I could hardly stand by it. Smoke ascended from various points around us; and the smell of the gas that escaped from these places was extremely pungent, and almost suffocating. It seemed as if it cut the very lungs, it was so sharp. For my part, I was glad to get down; and felt as if it were almost a tempting of Providence to be there, from motives of mere curiosity.

I understand, this evening, that since I was there, the lava has overflowed a part of the very path on which I went up; and that the celebrated guide Salvatore has given notice, that it is not safe at this moment to attempt the mountain at all. If so, the moment of my going up was fortunate. I observe this evening, that the stream of lava is brighter and more distinct than I have seen it any evening before. It is, indeed, and without any exaggeration, a river of fire, flowing down, for the distance of a mile or two, from the top of the mountain.

HERCULANEUM.—I went down a very long flight of modern steps before I reached the passages that lead to the theatre of Herculaneum, the only part that remains excavated. It was strange, indeed, in this subterranean theatre, once the place of concourse, and the seat of pleasure, to hear the roll of carriages far above, in the streets of a new village. Now all was dark and silent here, save what light our candles gave, and the formal and hackneyed sentences of the cicerone, as he pointed out the various localities. As the villages of Portici and Resina are built over Herculaneum, the excavations cannot proceed.

POMPEII.—You have a strange feeling in walking through Pompeii, as if you were admitted into a kind of sanctuary. For seventeen hundred years, it was hidden from the sight, and almost from the knowledge

of the world; there was a veil of mystery upon it, thick almost as that which Vesuvius spread over its dwellings, in the dark and fearful day of their overthrow. They are now opened afresh to the eyes of the world, and it seems as if one were admitted to the knowledge of some secret, in being allowed to cross their thresholds. I was permitted, by the politeness of the superintendent, procured by a letter of Mr. St. Angelo of Naples, to enter a room where the excavations where going forward. A part of a flute was thrown out while I was there; and a small fresco painting of a tiger on the wall was unveiled. The last time it was seen was nearly two thousand years ago; the eye that last looked upon it was that of the affrighted occupant of this dwelling; the next—moment, I was about saying—in which it is seen, is to-day; and the next person who sees it, is myself. It seems as if that man were but a step from me; as if a thousand years were, indeed, but a day.

There is an amphitheatre here, a large forum, several temples, and many fine houses. One of Cicero's favourite villas was here. Near it, at the house of Diomed, I completed my two hours' walk, and in Diomed's garden, beneath the portico that surrounded it, I sat down and ate the dinner I had brought with me—a glass of excellent Falernian wine assisting at once my philosophic and my physical man—my meditation upon the past, and enjoyment of the present time.

The Albergo dei Poveri is a vast establishment in Naples, which ought not to be called a poor-house, but an immense manufactory and school for the poor—for that is its character. The building is fifteen hundred feet in front; and has at present more than six thousand inmates. Everything is neat and in fine order. The military system in which the boys are trained, serves at once for recreation and exercise. This establishment speaks well, and promises well, for the Neapolitan state: *speaks* well, I ought, perhaps, to say, for the minister of the interior, Mr. St. Angelo, for it falls under his department, and owes its present improved condition, I understand, to him.

The Tomb of Virgil.—On the very edge of the grotto of Pausilippo, in what must have been, before that grotto or road was cut through the hill of Pausilippo, a deep and wild glen upon the hill—looking out upon the bay of Naples, and commanding a view of the city, stands the small, circular mound of brick, the only remaining portion of the tomb of Virgil. It is a rural and romantic spot, fitly chosen to hold the ashes of him who "sung of herds and fields." No one, with a schoolboy's recollection, and with the least faith in the identity of the spot, could stand there without emotion. Virgil, among the Roman writers, is pre-eminently the classic father. Cicero we admire as the great man, orator, and philosopher. Horace was a writer more astute and keen-witted, of a genius more racy and original, than the poet of Mantua. It is perhaps for this very reason, because everything is so moderate, mild, and gentle, in this great master of our early discipline, that I stood, with an almost indescribable feeling—as if I had been a son—upon the tomb of Virgil.

Churches in Naples.—San Martino—a perfect bijou—the very counterpart of St. Peter's at Rome—really not less splendid—with a number of fine paintings by Spagnoletti, but especially with such a profusion of fine work in marble, as I never saw in an equal compass—with such a floor of tessellated marble as I never saw anywhere. Gesu

Nuovo, very rich and beautiful in its way. S. Gennaro, the cathedral; with a great number of silver shrines and images. In the Capella di S. Severo, are the two celebrated veiled statues—one of Modesty, another of the dead Christ—amazingly fine. You could scarcely believe that the veil was marble.

The Carnival.—To-day I rode through the Toledo and the Strada Nova, a distance of two miles, in a line with hundreds of carriages, and amidst probably not less than one hundred thousand people in the streets and balconies of the houses. Masks are common on these occasions, and indeed convenient; for the amusement consists in pelting one another with sugar-plums, and little balls of plaster and lime, made to resemble sugar-plums. It is rather a poor and common-place way of making merry, though the king himself takes part in it. Nevertheless, the whole thing is quite amusing; perhaps the more so, because it is being amused with nothing. At any rate, I partook of the sport, and enjoyed the spectacle highly; and our party came back to the Crocelle, looking as if we had come out of a flour mill.

For a parting word of the Neapolitans, I will say that their beggars are the most importunate; their cheaters—and they are everybody you deal with—are the most unconscionable and persevering; and their population apparently the most idle, gay, and joyous, that I have seen in Europe.

On the thirty-first of January, I left Naples for Marseilles, by steamboat, stopping at the following places:—

Civita Vecchia—of which nothing is to be said but that it answers the purpose of a seaport to Rome.

Leghorn—is a well-built, good-looking city, with a better dressed and neater population than is seen in most of the Italian cities.

Pisa—to which we made an excursion from Leghorn, and passed a night there. The leaning tower is a very striking object. It is one hundred and ninety feet high, and declines from the perpendicular thirteen feet. As to the question whether this deviation from the perpendicular is owing to design or accident, I judged, from looking at it, that when it was raised to half the height, the leaning took place from the insufficiency of the foundation, and then that the remainder was built with reference to the leaning. For the deviation from the perpendicular is much less in the upper half; while the appearance at the base shows that the depression there was accidental. The cathedral, of which the leaning tower is the campanile, or belfry tower, is a grand old pile, with a profusion of paintings of no great value. The Campo Santo is a sort of cemetery, a repository of old sarcophagi, &c.; but was built for the particular purpose of enclosing a portion of sacred earth which was brought from Mount Calvary in Jerusalem, in the time of Richard Cœur de Lion. The sacred soil was to me the most interesting thing here; though the building, with its interior range of Gothic arcades, is fine too.

Before reaching Leghorn—not many miles from the port—we passed the island of Elba, and saw Corsica in the distance.

Genoa—gives no idea of what it is, from the harbour, for it seems to be jammed down under the surrounding hills, and looks meanly—but it is a city of palaces. A large proportion of the streets, however, are not more than eight or ten feet wide, which makes the whole city a

grand curiosity. We went through four or five palaces. They are not rich in paintings. The Serra Palace, however, has one of the richest rooms in Europe. The only very fine, first-rate painting I saw in Genoa, is Giulio Romano's Martyrdom of Stephen, in the church of St. Stephen. It was designed by Raphael, and the upper part, it is said, was painted by him. But the impressive part is Giulio Romano's — St. Stephen, his murderers, and Saul who "kept the clothes of them that stoned him," and whose countenance is clothed with a fine air of eagerness and confidence, without malignity — all of which is very characteristic of him "who verily thought that he ought to do many things against the name of Jesus." The glory of the picture, however, is the face of Stephen, as he "looks steadfastly up into heaven, and beholds Jesus standing on the right hand of God." There is such an union of tenderness, and pity, and triumph, and rapture in his countenance, as cannot be beheld without strong emotion; and I lingered before the picture as long as I could.

In taking leave of it, I felt as if the last glory of Italy were fading from my sight; yet I also beheld it die away, in the beams of the setting sun, upon the hills between Genoa and Nice, as we sailed along the Mediterranean shore. I was certainly not unwilling to leave Italy; yet I could not altogether help mingling sighs with my adieus to the land of so many treasures in art, of so many glorious recollections, yet, alas! of so much depression, poverty, misery, misrule, and despotism. Twelve separate governments, as absolute as any that ever existed in the world, are so many wheels of torture to poor Italy; while the great wheel of Austrian despotism grinds everything, government and people alike, into the dust. It is some comfort that the indignation against this system is universal. With whomsoever I have talked, marquis, count, scholar, priest, man of business, courier, or servant — and I have talked with one or more of each of these classes — each and all have expressed, and that very openly too, but one feeling. There is a point beyond which human nature, even degraded as it is in Italy, will not suffer, and the day of retribution must yet come; and when it does come, it will probably rise in clouds and set in blood. This would have come to pass before now, if the people had any confidence in each other — confidence enough to concert and carry on a conspiracy — but the moral degradation of Italy is also her thraldom.

Italy is the native land of the fine arts, and their present home; I might better say, perhaps, their prison. For nothing but the bolts and bars of state restriction prevents its treasures of art from departing for wealthier countries. In every considerable city, there is a commission appointed by the government, without whose consent no painting or statue can leave Italy; and with regard to the *chef d'œuvres* of art, this consent is quite out of the question. Indeed, the permission, in the present state of the country, would be thought, and would be in fact, suicidal. For the cities of Italy live upon strangers, and strangers would not come, if there were nothing to see. The climate, ruins, recollections, would draw some, indeed, but the number would be greatly diminished.

Would that Italy might consent, or could afford — as she will in better days — to part with some of her treasures; for then might we expect to see in America, pictures and statues from the hands of the

great masters. Or even if the pope would consent to farm out, to an American or English company, a part of the Campagna, or the bed of the Tiber, to dig for statues, we might have, I doubt not, *one* noble gallery at least, in each country.

It is often said, that the arts cannot flourish in a republic; and this is said, in the face of such examples as Athens and Republican Rome. But why can they not? I ask. Want of patronage is the reason usually assigned, but to this reason there are two material exceptions to be taken. In the first place, the arts may find patronage in the general spirit of a country, as well as in royal or princely revenues. Let there be intelligence and refinement among any people, and the patronage of the arts must follow. And is it not safer thus to trust the encouragement of the arts to the intelligence and free competition of a whole people, than to a few individuals, kings, or princes, who, if they have often fostered genius, have sometimes cramped and enslaved it? Would not a generous artist rather take an intelligent people for his patron, than a king? May not the fine arts, in this respect, be safely and advantageously subjected to the same ordeal as literature. We have wealth enough, we have intelligence in America, and I am willing to rely upon these for the inevitable consequence. But in the next place, I would not trust patronage alone for the prosperity of the arts. I should place more reliance upon the genius of a people. Nothing could repress such a development among a people like the Athenians; nothing could elicit it among barbarians. Our country has already works to show, which may vie, I will venture to say, with any contemporaneous works of English art. The landscapes of Cole persuade us that the days of Claude may come back again. In Mount and Durand, as painters of grotesque and common life, we have artists that enable us to look at the works of Teniers and Wilkie without despair or discouragement. I doubt whether the best portrait painters among us, now that Sir Thomas Lawrence is gone, are excelled anywhere in the world. Page and Flagg are very young artists, but full of promise. Allston has already a fame in Europe, and the public are anxiously waiting for a production from him in the department of historical painting, which will give us something to quote in this loftiest department of the art. Greenough, too, we claim as an American artist; and I wish there might be presented to him, by more influential voices than mine, the benefit he might confer on his country by coming and living among us. If he would open a studio of sculpture in Boston, or New York, or Philadelphia, it could not fail to have a decided effect upon the public taste.

It would be sad, indeed, if the allegation were true, that the arts could not flourish in a republic; for it is precisely there that they are wanted to complete the system of social influences.

It is a mistake into which novices fall, to suppose that the arts are unfavourable to morality. The truth is, that all this is conventional; and however a gallery of pictures or statues may strike the unaccustomed eye, it all soon comes to be regarded as indifferently as the varieties of costume in the living person. In fact, the fine arts have usually been the handmaids of virtue and religion. More than half of the great paintings in the world are illustrative of religious subjects; and embracing mythology in this account, more than half of the statues are of the same character. And to refer to kindred arts — ar-

chitecture, too, has built its noblest structures for religion, and music has composed its sublimest strains for the sanctuary. Genius, indeed —that inspiration from heaven—has always shown its descent from above, by this direction of its labours.

The introduction of the arts into our country, then, is not to be dreaded on the score of morality. Is it not on every account greatly to be desired? The most material deficiency among us, perhaps—next to the want of virtue—is likely to be the want of refinement. There is need among us of objects that kindle up admiration and enthusiasm, that awaken the sense of delight and wonder, that break up the habits of petty calculation and sordid interest, and breathe a liberal and generous soul into the people; and this need the arts would supply.

Again; it is too truly said, that we are a people devoted to gain, that utility is the grand law, and wealth the grand distinction here; and that neither the law nor the distinction is lofty enough to train up a great people. I object not to utility as a *rule* of action—but I object to the common construction of the rule. That is not useful alone, which conduces to immediate comfort; that is as truly so, which conduces to general culture and refinement. So that a fine painting, or statue, or building, is as truly useful as a canal, a railroad, or a ship.

It is said, moreover, that our political and nominal equality—literal and actual equality it cannot be, though foreign writers are continually confounding them—that our equality, such as it is, tends to bring down our whole people to the level of the lowest; that it is the parent, not of improvement, but only of pretension and of self-complacency; and, in fine, that under all these influences, the lofty enthusiasm of the people is degenerating—that the beau ideal, the beautiful, and the sublime, are sinking under the weight of the practical, the popular, and the vulgar.

If I were discussing these points fully, I certainly should argue against the unqualified charges in question. And yet I should, and I do confess, that there are dangers in these respects, which urge upon us the importance of setting up every antagonist principle that we can find in education, literature, and the arts. In this view, the almost exclusive direction of expenditure in our cities, to purposes of fashionable display, is extremely to be regretted. It is not of the extent of the expenditure, but of its tendencies, that I complain. I rejoice that our citizens have superfluous millions to expend, and that they are disposed to expend, rather than to hoard them. If we are a people eager for gain, though I have no doubt that this national trait is exaggerated, yet it cannot be denied that we are equally willing to scatter abroad the fruits of our industry. Meanness, certainly, is not one of our national vices. If we talk much about dollars, though really I cannot, in this respect, see much difference between us and other nations, except in the value of the catch-word coin—"*un sous*" in France, "*un paolo*" in Italy, "a shilling" in England, being about as conspicuous in conversation as "a dollar" with us—yet if this unlucky word does roll with such provoking facility from our lips, where, I should like to know, does the thing itself roll so freely from the hand, as in America? Pity it is —for I care more for improvement at home than reputation abroad—that something more of this boundless profusion of expense could not

be diverted from its present course, to the encouragement of the arts! The dresses of a fashionable American lady, for a single year, would place a beautiful painting on her parlour wall, which would contribute to the improvement and pleasure of herself and her friends for life — while her dresses contribute to nobody's improvement or pleasure, but her milliners and mantua-makers. The piles and pyramids of confectionary stuff that are placed, in the course of a year upon a single table, might buy a statue.* One half of that which is now expended in some of our cities for ephemeral superfluities might, in a quarter of a century, fill them with statues and paintings: neither would that deduction diminish anything from the true grace, elegance, and happiness of life. Then might we have something for a visiter to see in our cities, besides a great mass of brick houses. It is really mortifying to find, on such an occasion, how little one has to show his friend from a foreign country, or from a distant part of his own. Would that some Girard among us might think of founding a gallery of the arts! And what a benefit might any man of wealth, however moderate, confer on society, if, instead of filling his house with splendid furniture, and entertainments, he should leave all that to the regulation of a decorous and dignified simplicity, and fill his house with objects that would give a thousand times more pleasure to every visiter, who is not a blockhead; and would contribute, at the same time, to the so much needed improvement and refinement of the whole country! Why may not our academies of arts in the various cities undertake to establish permanent galleries, and successfully make an appeal to our citizens to aid them? Grant that the beginning were discouraging, and the accumulation slow. Everything must have a beginning; and a good enterprise had better proceed slowly, than proceed not at all. The bare fact, too, that there is a permanent depository for the preservation of the works of art, would naturally invite and induce the gift or bequest of such works.

In this connexion, I cannot help offering one suggestion, for which I am indebted to a gentleman of distinguished taste, that deserves, as it seems to me, the attention of religious congregations. They are already existing combinations for religious improvement. They are able, without burdening any individual, to place good paintings in all their churches. Suppose — and this is the suggestion — that any congregation should commence the undertaking, by a collection in the church, or by individual subscriptions, and when a sufficient sum is obtained to defray the expense of a painting, let the purchase be made by a judicious committee appointed for that purpose. By such a plan as this for successive acquisitions, carried on from generation to generation, the country might at length be filled with the finest productions of the

* Speaking of statues, the human body is a living statue, whose beauty and proportion were as much designed to be admired as those of marble. What would be thought of a marble statue, if its costume were made to resemble that of one of our modern fine ladies? A fashionable woman may dress for one half the expense she now does, may be twice as agreeable in person to her husband and everybody else, may have less care about her wardrobe, and more health and more comfort every way — and why does she not? Because she dare not resist the French milliner! Is this a matter too trifling to notice? It ruins thousands; it makes tens of thousands unhappy — goading fashion and business alike to excess and bondage; it causes the improvement of hundreds of thousands to be neglected.

pencil. Our own artists would immediately feel the stimulus of the call, and the contributions of genius abroad would be brought within our reach. The effect upon the public taste could not fail to be great and striking. The effect upon devotion would be no less salutary. Painting is a language, as truly as that which is heard from the pulpit. Whose mind would not be touched and elevated, if, as he took his seat in church, and waited a few moments, perhaps, for the service — better so than the service should wait for him — he could fix his eye upon some Scripture scene living upon the canvass — upon some saint, rapt and entranced in heavenly contemplation, or upon some noble martyr, triumphing through faith over the agonies of death? The silent walls would then teach us. We should worship, as it were, amidst the innumerable company of saints and angels; the shadowy forms of the venerated dead would seem to hover around our altars; and we should meditate and pray amidst the opening visions of heaven.

Let it not be thought sacrilegious to speak thus of adorning the temples of religion. Let the devout man look around him. Where will he find pictures to equal in splendour those which are painted on the dome of heaven; which are hung on pillared cloud and mountain wall, all around this mighty temple of the universe? Nor let it be thought that among the means of a nation's improvement, influences of this character are beneath attention. The system of things in which heaven has placed us, is not confined to palpable and immediate utility. "What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" is the cry of a *barbarous* people and a *worldly* generation. It would be indeed an intolerable reproach upon a civilized people, to say that it had no tastes, but what comfortable houses, crowded granaries, and stored cellars could supply. And nature, indeed, has as truly made provision for the culture of enthusiasm, refinement of taste, and delicacy of sentiment, as it has for the supply of our physical necessities. The Author of nature has shown that it was not beneath *his* care to provide for the gratification of sentiments, precisely similar to those which are addressed by the arts. The world, composed of hill and dale, mountain and valley, not one boundless ploughed field to yield food; dressed in gay and bright liveries, not in one sober-suited colour; filled with the music of its streams and groves, not doomed to endless monotony or everlasting silence; such a world, the dwelling-place of nations, the school of their discipline, the temple of their worship, plainly shows that they were not destined to be pupils of cold and stern utility alone, but of many and diversified influences; of gracefulness, of elegance, of beneficence, beauty, and sublimity.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FRANCE — MARSEILLES — AVIGNON — LYONS — THE DILIGENCE — PARIS — VERSAILLES — PERE LA CHAISE — GARDENS OF THE TUILERIES, LUXEMBOURG, ETC. HELLS OF PARIS — SEVRES — GOBELIN TAPESTRY — ST. CLOUD — SUBJECT OF RECREATIONS.

Marseilles.—On the sixth of February I arrived here on my way to Paris. This is a large commercial city, well built, and with a good many fine public walks planted with trees; yet, on the whole, I do not find occasion to dissent from the remark of a gentleman, on whom I called, "that for one coming from Italy and going to Paris, there is nothing in Marseilles."

Lyons, *February* 12.—La belle France! La belle France!—poor Mary of Scotland's frequent exclamation—has created in all travellers such an expectation about this country, that I have heard many express the greatest disappointment, who have passed from Marseilles to Paris. This has prepared me to be disappointed the other way. The valley of the Rhone through which I have travelled a hundred and fifty miles from Avignon, is a fine country, and in the proper season must be beautiful. I cannot say this of the villages, which, like all French villages, and all others that I have seen on the Continent, are miserable. How *is* society to be regenerated, till people are more comfortable and more happy than they can be, in the cold, dark, dirty, unfloored, and comfortless houses which compose these villages—where the inhabitants are wedged in together, in close barricades of buildings, with narrow, damp, filthy streets, and everything, one would think, to make them sick of life—everything to preclude them from having any just ideas, any just philosophy of life: and by everything I mean ignorance, poverty, misery, toil without relief, and existence without object!

At Avignon I visited the tomb of Laura, the object of Petrarch's unfortunate passion. This was all I could do, though the guide book says that "every traveller of taste and sensibility will spend a day here to visit the neighbouring vale of Vaucluse"—Petrarch's residence—but I had objects more attractive to me, in the shape of some parcels of letters a month old, at Paris; and so consented to pass on, though passing for a traveller of no taste or sensibility. Laura's remains were interred in a church at Avignon, which was destroyed in the Revolution—some fine Gothic remains of which are still standing; and the spot—the immediate place of the tomb—is designated by a cluster of cypress trees. Fit emblem! and yet, how do the sympathies of mankind cluster around every instance of absorbing passion, fortunate or unfortunate!

At Lyons I have visited the old Gothic cathedral—and glad am I to see the Gothic architecture again—there is nothing like it for impressiveness in churches. I have been to the silk manufactories also; that of velvet is very curious; for the rest, they are very much like the cotton factories. From the heights of the city, there is a fine view of the neighbouring valley of the Rhone.

This, I believe, is the last day of the carnival here. The streets are filled with people. Masked processions, with music, are passing in various quarters; madcap-looking fellows in masks are running about with troops of boys at their heels; necromancers and sleight-of-hand rogues are collecting circles around them, in the public squares; and so the day passes. These spectacles constantly suggest to me questions on the subject of popular recreations. So they be innocent, they must be desirable for any people. These are apparently innocent enough in all conscience; but I doubt whether the people of America would be satisfied with things so trifling.

Paris, *February* 16.—Let any invalid traveller, coming from the south of Europe to Paris at this season of the year, look well to his wardrobe. I have literally doubled every article of my wearing apparel on the way from Marseilles, and yet have suffered with the cold.

All the modes of public conveyance on the Continent of Europe, except the French malle poste, are extremely disagreeable. The *Italian* vetturino drives the same horses, day after day; and wishing to spare his cattle by stopping two or three hours at noon, he gets you up an hour before day-break, and, when he is not afraid of robbers, drives you quite into the evening. "Well," you say with yourself, while you are yawning and groaning through your hasty toilet in the morning, "take courage; this tedious journey will be the sooner over." But, alas! here you reckon without your host—your vetturino; for the misery of the thing is, that after all this ado, you only get twenty-five or thirty miles a day. The *French* diligence, in many cases, indeed, drives post—that is, has relays of horses—but the trouble here is, that you drive on, on, on, day and night, night and day, till you reach your journey's end. You stop for nothing but to eat, and not very often for that; only twice, sometimes but once, in twenty-four hours. Meanwhile, things go on very sadly, both with your outward and inner man. Your beard is unshaved, your hair is uncombed, your face is unwashed; your boots want blacking, your clothes want brushing, your collar shrinks down ashamed behind your cravat; your very senses gradually lose "touch and time;" your fingers grow clumsy, your legs stiff, your feet strange to you; and you feel a sort of curiosity, when you pull off your boots, to see those old acquaintances again. Moreover, the man's wits get into very perilous disorder. He holds strange colloquies with himself about matter and spirit, waking and sleeping, thinking and dreaming; the boundaries of thought seem to have become shadowy and uncertain. "Is it fancy, or is it fact?" he says, as some strange imagination flits before him, in the twilight of a half-slumbering half-waking consciousness. At length, on the third or fourth morning, he stumbles out of the diligence, scarcely knowing what is left of him, or what planet he has lighted upon.

Paris, somebody says, is a place where there is no human want, but it can be supplied. I had a grateful proof of this, two minutes after I got out of the diligence, in the cold grey dawn of the morning, fatigued, chilled, and comfortless. As I stepped along the side-walk, while they took down the luggage, a man accosted me, and said, in French, "Do you want anything?"—"Do I want anything!" I answered: "yes, I want everything: I want a chamber; I want a fire; I want some café au lait, and breakfast."—"There," he replied, pointing to a door not

six feet off—"there, monsieur! you can have them." And, to be sure—returning for my baggage—in ten minutes I was in a neat chamber by a comfortable fire, and in ten more, café au lait, accompanied by bread and butter, was smoking on my table.

February 22.—I have ridden out to Versailles to-day—a palace and a city—the city built for the palace; and it once contained one hundred thousand inhabitants. All this was the work of Louis XIV. who expended immense and untold sums of money here—sums for which, with other follies, his successors have been called to a bitter reckoning. Yes, it was from this palace that Louis XVI. was dragged to the guillotine in Paris. It was on a low balcony of this palace, that Maria Antoinette came forth with her children, that the spectacle of their helplessness might appease the infuriated multitude below; and which did turn their fickle hearts, for a moment, towards this beautiful representative of female loveliness and fallen royalty. I confess that this, to me, was the most interesting spot about the palace. *Into* the palace, however, I did not gain admittance. Two or three rooms are now being put into the condition in which they were left by Louis XVI. and for the time the palace is shut. We went over the immense park, however, and visited the two smaller palaces—the Great and Little Trianon. The Little Trianon was at times the residence of Josephine; her sleeping chamber, and the bed of her own arranging, were shown to us. This, again, was a point of interest; for Josephine was not less lovely than Maria Antoinette, and her misfortunes were scarcely less—divorce, to her, being an evil as great, probably, as death was to her predecessor in the occupancy of this royal lodge. For this was a favourite spot, too, with Maria Antoinette. The garden, which, with its hills, rocks, lakes, and streams, is altogether an artificial work, was laid out under her direction. There are three or four Swiss cottages in it; and here, the *conducteur* over the grounds told us, that Louis XVI. his queen, and their children, used sometimes to enact the part of Swiss peasants, selling milk and cheese, and giving *fêtes champêtres* to one another—and envying, perhaps, in their hearts, the simplicity of a pastoral life.

February 23.—This morning being Sunday, I determined to go and meditate among the tombs. I went, that is to say, and as you will anticipate, to the celebrated Père la Chaise, the great cemetery of Paris, lying on the east side of the city. My anticipations of all that can be interesting, romantic, appropriate, and attractive in such a spot, scarcely knew any bounds, and I must say that I was disappointed. The ground chosen has not near the capabilities of our "sweet Auburn," being a single hill or ridge of land, and it does not seem to me to be laid out with any remarkable taste. There is no natural growth of trees upon it; trees, indeed, are planted along the principal avenues; but the place is almost entirely covered with a plantation of sickly-looking larches, or some other evergreen resembling it—for they are not cypresses, as they ought to be; they are not fir trees; they are not any trees; but mere shrubs of a uniform aspect, eight or ten feet high, that look as if they would never grow higher. But the greatest objection I felt, was to the crowded aspect of the place. The tombs are so near together, that there is scarcely space for anything picturesque; and the bad effect of this arrangement is increased by the little square palings

or fences by which many of the graves are surrounded, and between which the passages are so narrow, that you can scarcely walk through them. There are monuments, indeed, which have more space, but still they have not space enough. The *position* of this spot is indeed striking, for it overlooks Paris. You look from the city of the dead, directly down upon the city of the living; from the midst of monitory emblems and marble silence, upon a city of pleasures and vanities; the gayest and the most vicious, probably, in the world.

As you go up to the cemetery, the street by which you ascend becomes, on the approach to it, almost filled with shops, for the sale either of marble monuments, or of those little chaplets of amaranthine flowers, of which you have so often heard. I saw many buying and others bearing those offerings of remembrance to the tombs of their friends. Of their friends, I say; yet it was striking to observe that the tomb of Abelard and Eloise—the finest, by the bye, in the cemetery—was loaded with more of these offerings than any other; such is the testimony of human nature to its affections, wild and wayward as those affections may have been.

On coming from Père la Chaise, I passed through the garden of the Tuileries. Nothing in Paris has astonished and delighted me more than the magnitude, and in that respect the magnificence of its public gardens and promenades. The garden of the Tuileries and the Champs Elysées, lying contiguous to it, or separated only by the Place of Concord—stretching along the Seine westward from the palace of the Tuileries—these gardens together contain not less than a hundred and forty acres—a hundred and forty acres of pleasure grounds, thrown into public walks, and planted with trees, in the very heart of Paris! Nor is this all. There are other public places—the garden of the Luxembourg—the esplanade in front of the Hospital of Invalids, and the Champ de Mars—almost as large. These places are all crowded on Sunday afternoon; and when I came through the garden of the Tuileries to-day, and paused to gaze upon the spectacle, I did not know whether to think it more beautiful or sublime. The whole space of the gardens was almost literally filled. Tens of thousands of people were walking here—well dressed, cheerful, well behaved, quiet—nobody speaking above the drawing-room tone, which in Paris is very low—family groups, parents and children, old and young—and all seeming to enjoy enough in the bare walk and conversation; all, unless it were the children, who would run around their parents, pursuing one another in sportive circles. Surely it was beautiful—every separate group was so: but when I looked abroad upon the countless, mighty, moving multitude, it seemed to me sublime. All the other public places, I was told, were just as much crowded; and, indeed, I saw the Luxembourg, and found it so. Our people in America know nothing of enjoying out-of-door recreations, as the people of Europe do.

February 25.—It is unfortunate for me that the Louvre is shut up, but there is a fine gallery of paintings at the Luxembourg, in which I have spent two or three hours. There are three capital pieces of Guerin: Cain, with his Wife and Children; the wife is exquisitely done; it is the policy, so to speak, of poetry and the arts, to make her beautiful, as it enhances, by contrast, the atrocity of Cain's deed. Also a Phædra and Hippolytus, very great: and Marius, escaped from

the persecutions of Sylla, and on returning home, finding his wife dead. But I cannot enter into details. Guerin was, I think, a great man.

I have visited, to know for myself what they are, the *hells* of Paris. These are the great gambling-houses. The thing that struck me most in them, was the apparent absence of everything like what the name imports. The scene is marked with entire decorum and modesty in the air of the women, and composure and gravity on the part of the men; and yet the company consists of the most vicious persons of both sexes. So far is this decorum carried at Frascati's, that servants were in attendance in the antechamber, who took our hats, over-coats, and over-shoes, as if we were to enter an ordinary party. This was to me the most instructive feature of the scene: for after all, I suppose it is true, that hell is not found so much in physical horrors, in lurid flames and frightful countenances, as in smooth-faced, decorous wickedness; not so much in groans, and shrieks, and imprecations perhaps, as in soft words and fair pretensions. In short, where hell is, does not appear to the outward eye, and, perhaps, it never will. But who, from the silent depths of the soul, with the eye all spiritual, has not perceived things worse than any outward form can show, or scene exhibit, or words express?

Sevres is the seat of the celebrated manufactory of Sevres porcelain. By the aid of a private letter of introduction to Mr. Bronigiart, the superintendent of the establishment, we were permitted to go over the whole of it. I cannot enter into any minute description. Suffice it to say, that the porcelain clay—it is mixed, by the bye, with some substance which is a secret—is a most ductile substance—is moulded into its various forms by the hand—is baked with extreme attention and care—is painted with peculiar metallic paints, dissolved in spirits of turpentine—is painted exquisitely—with as much labour and talent as any other painting can be—and the result, such beauty that I have scarcely admired anything in Europe so much. It is said that a fusion of the metallic paint takes place in the process of baking, so that there is a softness in the picture that no touch of the pencil can give.

With the Sevres establishment I must connect the Gobelin manufactory of tapestry, which I went to see to-day. They are both, *en passant*, royal establishments, and the products are too expensive for almost any but royal revenues. If I was delighted at Sevres, I was *astonished* out of measure at the Gobelins. Here is tapestry—worsted and silk—so woven, wrought, or what you please—it is not woven exactly, the process is something between embroidering and knitting—here it is, so perfect a copy of painting, that at the first glance you would scarcely know the difference. The artist—for so he deserves to be called, rather than a workman—has the painting to be copied, behind him, and the warp stretched before him; and into this warp—looking back every moment at the painting—he contrives to insert his various-coloured threads so exactly, as to produce the amazing result of which I tell you.

Of St. Cloud—which I have passed by a moment, to speak of the Gobelin manufactory—I have not much to say. It is a beautiful palace, six miles west from Paris, commanding a fine view of the metropolis and surrounding country. It is of moderate size, furnished, and in the summer much resorted to by the royal family. St. Cloud

was the favourite residence of Bonaparte. As we came out of the palace, two swans in a large basin of water, swimming, and with their wings lifted, to be borne on by the breeze, attracted our attention — demanded it, indeed, for they directed their course towards us, and came to our very feet. The plumage is far more beautiful than I had supposed. A swan is a very different thing from a large goose with a long neck.

My last sentence is rather an odd sort of leave to take of Paris, and so I will add a sentence more appropriate to its character — for Paris is like anything but a swan in a pond. The grand characteristic of this metropolis is, in short, its boundless ministration to the public entertainment. Its unequalled public gardens and walks; its numerous theatres; its innumerable cafés and restaurants; its perpetual concerts, balls, &c. are all of this nature.

But let me detain the reader a little on leaving Paris, with some thoughts on the subject of recreation, that often presented themselves to my mind amidst the scenes which I have witnessed on the Continent. It is a subject which among us in America, seems to need something more than a passing comment; which needs, indeed, a more thorough discussion than I can pretend here to give it.

There are other things, indeed, belonging to this life, and constituting the largest portion of it. There are grave duties and serious tasks. There are the toils of industry, the calculations of business, the cares that spring from the domestic relations. There are hard studies; or that no less intense energy of mind that is required to meet those trials of virtue, or those assaults of calamity, which, in one form or another, it is the fate of life continually to encounter. But Heaven has not ordained, man cannot endure, perpetual application either of the bodily or mental powers. Amusement, and the cultivation of taste — the indulgence of our natural sensibility to what is beautiful in form, delightful in sound, and graceful in motion — was as truly designed to have its place in life, as labour or study.

That a plan of life embracing these objects is accordant with Heaven's wisdom, is evident from its own express and recorded example. When the Supreme Being chose a people to be his peculiar care, he did not limit his wise supervision of their affairs to the purpose of making them an industrious, comfortable, and wealthy people; but he added recreations and embellishments to life.

The Jewish feasts, festivals, or holidays, let it be remembered, were of divine appointment. They were numerous, also, compared with our Protestant indulgences of this kind; being eighteen festivals in the course of the year, and some of them continuing for several days. They were occasions for devotion, indeed, but also for business — answering the purpose of the great European fairs; for mutual and friendly intercourse among the tribes; and for feasting, music, and dancing. "The harp and the viol, the tabret and the pipe, and wine, were in their festivals;" and Miriam and the daughters of Shiloh, the beautiful ones of the land, led forth their dances.

The expediency of such intervals for recreation has been acknowledged and acted upon by all nations, and we are the first that have seemed to doubt it. Labour grows wearisome, and life grows dull without amusement. The general health, the physical energy of a

people, demand seasons of relaxation. It is an observation of philosophers and physicians, and it is too obvious, indeed, to need their authority, that, in proportion as public sports and games die out among a people, it loses flexibility of nerve, strength of muscle, and the power of adaptation to the various emergencies of war, danger, and difficulty, such as life is continually throwing in our path. And the mind, in like manner, is liable to become too rigid and contracted in the perpetual effort to grasp the same objects, the same studies. It is liable to want flexibility, to want expansion. It is likely to become the residence of low conceit, of rooted prejudice, of a stern creed and a sour bigotry.

If these general observations are just, they certainly do not lose any of their propriety in application to us. We are said to be a people, more eagerly than any other in the world, devoted to the accumulation of property. We are charged, also, with what is called a republican tendency to vulgarity of habits, and manners, and ways of thinking. It is intimated that everything wants freedom and expansion among us, but our good opinion of ourselves; that our mind, our manners, and our very speech, are pressed down and contracted under some weight, either of general example or public opinion; and something, I confess, has occurred to narrow and flatten our national *speech* and *tone* from the force and fullness of the noble English dialect. And as to the asperity both of political and religious disputes, the bondage of prejudice, and the bitterness of party spirit, it is common to acknowledge that we have quite enough of them among us.

I confess, at any rate, that I so far yield to the truth of these allegations and admissions, as to think it desirable that more cheerfulness, more liberality, more freedom of mind from the anxieties of business, and a more expansive social feeling, should be introduced into our national character. This expansion of social feeling we are particularly liable to want. The tendencies of society among us are to excessive private and domestic ambition, to reserve, jealousy, and distrust. Seasons of public amusement, in which all classes engaged, would tend to break up social clanships, and to soothe angry collisions. It has been said that the holiday sports of the old time are dying out in England; partly from the prevalence of a more jealous and aristocratic spirit in the upper classes. So long as those classes were fenced around with exclusive and undisputed titles to respect, they had no fear of compromising their dignity by mixing freely with the people and with their pleasures. But as these imprescriptible titles are falling before the march of modern reform, their possessors are surrounding themselves with other barriers; and the strongest barrier they could seek, is found in the reserve of their manners. The same causes are at work in this country, and they work in absolute freedom from all the modifying influences of hereditary rank and entailed estates. A distinguished writer abroad once said, in conversation, "You, in America, are the most aristocratic people in the world." I was startled with the observation, but I confess there is some truth in it. The fear of compromising one's dignity in our society, the fear of what others will say, the consciousness of being amenable to public opinion, makes men jealous, reserved, and distant: it acts, in fact, as a restriction upon the whole freedom of private life and feeling. The consequence is, I know,

that it is extremely difficult to introduce public holiday amusements in our country; but it is equally, and none the less certain that they are very much needed to spread a common and a kindly feeling abroad among the people, and to counteract the tendencies to social exclusiveness, pride, and dissension. And the day may come when we shall find these tendencies more dangerous to our prosperity, and to our very union as a people, than any levity, aye, or any vices, engendered by public amusements. Nay, and if the miseries of life are proper subjects to be dealt with by the moralist, this is such a subject. For I have no doubt, that directly or indirectly, one half of the miseries of life in our country spring from pride and competition, and from the extravagance in expenses, and the irritations of feeling, consequent upon them.

There is another view in which the subject of amusements, light as it may be thought, goes deep into all questions about our national improvement and happiness. We are making great efforts in America to bring about various moral reforms. At the head of these enterprises stands the temperance reformation. And the public attention, as was natural in the appalling circumstances of the case, has been very much occupied with the immediate evil, and the obvious methods of supplying the remedy. But it seems to me that it is time to go deeper into this matter, and to inquire how the reform is to be carried on and sustained in the country. "By embodying the entire nation in a temperance society," will it be said? I think not, even if that point could be gained. We must have some stronger bond than that of formal association, some stronger provision than that of temporary habit to rely on. We must lay the foundations of permanent reform in the principles of human nature, and in the very framework of society. Suppose that this nation and every individual in it, were now temperate, how are they to be kept so? The zeal of individuals in this cause will die away; the individuals themselves will die; how is the people, supposing it were made temperate, to be kept so? There was a time, in former days, when our people were *all* temperate—when a small bottle of strong waters sufficed for a whole army—when, that is to say, ardent spirits were used only as a medicine. Why, from those early days of pristine virtue and rigid piety, did the nation fall away into intemperance? And how, I ask again, are we to expect to stand, where our fathers fell?

In answer to this question, let me observe, that there is, in human nature, and never to be rooted out of it, a want of excitement and exhilaration. The cares and labours of life often leave the mind dull, and when it is relieved from them—and it *must* be relieved—let this be remembered—there must be seasons of relief, and the question is, how are these seasons to be filled up—when the mind enjoys relief from its occupations, I say, that relief must come in the shape of something cheering and exhilarating. The man cannot sit down dull and stupid—and he ought not. Now, suppose that society provides him with no cheerful or attractive recreations, that society, in fact, frowns upon all amusements; that the importunate spirit in business, and the sanctimonious spirit in religion, and the supercilious spirit in fashion, all unite to discountenance popular sports and spectacles, and thus, that all cheap and free enjoyments, the hale, hearty, holiday recreations are out of use, and out of reach—what now will the man, set free from

business or labour, be likely to do? He asks for relief and exhilaration, he asks for escape from his cares and anxieties; society in its arrangements offers him none; the tavern and the ale-house propose to supply the want; what so likely as that he will resort to the tavern and the ale-house? I have no doubt that one reason why our country fell into such unusual intemperance, was the want of simple, innocent, and authorised recreations in it. I am fully persuaded that some measure of this sort is needful, to give a natural and stable character to the temperance reform.

The reason why the French are not intemperate, is not, as is commonly thought, that their only drink is wine. They have brandy, *eau de vie*, and it is everywhere drank, but usually in moderation. And the reason of this is partly to be found, I believe, in their cheerfulness, in their sports and spectacles, in the resorts everywhere provided for simple entertainment.

The same principle is thought to be applicable to the late progress of intemperance in England. With reference to this point, I extract one or two passages from the London *Morning Chronicle*.

"The evidence taken by the select committee on drunkenness, proves but too clearly the proposition, that the want of agreeable occupation is the great cause of that beastly vice, the disgrace of our nation. Savages are uniformly found disposed to intoxication, which enables them to escape from the insufferable burden of listlessness. All sorts of mental cultivation — whatever occupies the mind agreeably — counteracts the tendency to drunkenness. Mr. George Garrington, of Great Missenden, Bucks, the son of an acting magistrate, whose evidence is communicated by Mr. Chadwick, says, 'If the labourer is suffered to go from his daily work like a farm-horse, with nothing of his own to think about, he will find amusement for himself in some way or other, and will fall into bad habits. I need not enlarge on the evils of the public-house and the beer-shop.' Some very curious evidence of working people who had been in France, Switzerland, and Germany, taken under the factory commission, illustrates the beneficial tendency of the liberty enjoyed in these countries by the poor."

Again: "But though we contend that in no case ought the *use* of anything not positively noxious to be prohibited on account of possible *abuse*, and that in matters of eating and drinking, the legislature ought never to interfere with individual liberty; we are not the less sensible, that of all indulgences, that of drinking to excess is the most pernicious. The drunkard is not only miserable himself, but he is a nuisance to all with whom he is connected. He is a bad servant, a bad father, and a bad husband; and when he has once passed the Rubicon, he is, we believe, utterly irreclaimable. This we know, that no consideration would ever induce us to give any employment to a man or woman addicted to drunkenness; and the most charitable wish we could utter for a drunkard would be, that his life should be as short as possible. But drunkenness is the vice of people who are listless, and betake themselves to the bottle for relief. The individuals most addicted to drunkenness are not the gay and the cheerful—the men whose minds are occupied with any pursuit, whether study or diversion; but the heavy—the phlegmatic. It is the same with nations. The nations that cultivate music and dancing are comparatively sober. It was

remarked during the Peninsular war, that the German soldiers, who had a variety of amusements, were never drunk on duty; while the great difficulty was to keep an English soldier from the wine-house. The Germans are naturally as heavy a people as ourselves—they were once notorious for their deep potations. They are now comparatively sober. In every village are to be found music clubs. The song and the dance are frequent. But no people are more careful or industrious than the Germans."

Let it not be said, as if it were a fair reply to all this, that men are intemperate *in the midst* of their recreations. The question is not what they do, with their vicious habits already acquired, but how they came by these habits; and the question again is not, whether a man may not fall into inebriety, amidst the purest recreations as well as when away from them, but what he is *likely* to do. In short, to do justice to the argument, it should be supposed that a people is perfectly temperate, and then may fairly be considered the question—how it is most likely to be kept so. It is certain that there is no natural appetite for spirituous drinks; but for sports and spectacles, for music and dancing, for games and theatrical representations, there is a natural inclination: and an inclination, which, though often perverted, must be allowed, in the original elements, to be perfectly innocent—as innocent as the sportiveness of a child, or its love of beautiful colours and fine shows. But grant that the tendencies to intemperance were equally natural and strong: yet, I say, if there were among any people, authorised holidays, and holiday sports, if there were evening assemblies, and a *pure* theatre —if there were in every village a public promenade, where music might frequently be heard in the evening, would not these places be likely to draw away many from the resorts of intemperance? I confess, when I have seen of other nations, tens and hundreds of thousands abroad in the public places, without any rudeness or riot among them, without one single indication of inebriety in all the crowd; when I have seen this again and again, day after day, I have asked what there is to prevent our own more intelligent people from conducting themselves with similar propriety. In seven months upon the Continent of Europe, though living amidst crowds—though living in taverns, in hotels, in public-houses, I have not seen four intoxicated persons! But I have seen in parks, and gardens, and places of public assembly, millions of persons, exhilarated by music, by spectacles, by scenery, flowers, and fragrance, cheerful without rudeness, and gay without excess. There are moralists and preachers among us, who tell us that we enjoy great advantages in our freedom from European amusements; but I very much doubt it.

In saying this, I do not shut my eyes to the dangers that spring from recreation; but I think those dangers are greater, for the ban that is laid on the little recreation there is among us. Some, indeed, are prevented from partaking of it; but they probably are no better for their abstinence, and may be worse. They may be not a whit more virtuous, and only something more proud and uncharitable. Another class of persons does partake, but partly by stealth, and with a wounded conscience; and is just as bad as if it were doing wrong, though it be actually doing right. Another class still partakes and holds it right to do so, and so is not sinning against its own conscience; but I submit,

whether amusements which are not authorised by the public religious sentiment of a country, are not likely to do some injury to those who insist, however conscientiously, upon enjoying them. Will not pleasures be apt to be taken in excess, which are taken in the spirit of defiance? And if not, yet will not those who partake of fashionable amusements be likely to rank themselves with the irreligious, and insensibly to set aside the obligations of religion? Are they not found saying sometimes, when those obligations are urged upon them, "that all that may be well enough for such and such persons; but for their part that they do not pretend to be very strict, or religious?" What must be the state of that man who feels as if it were a sort of hypocrisy in him to pray? There is a principle of consistency in every mind, which leads it to endeavour to act up to its assumed character. What better can we expect, then, than that he who assumes to be of an irreligious class, should be irreligious? We talk much about parties in this country. There are no parties among us, possessed of such deep-seated, mutual dislike, and doing so much mutual injury, as the religious and irreligious parties!

But it may be said, and probably will, by some, "We are afraid of holidays; we do not quite like to have this language of patronage and indulgence extended to amusements; the world is thoughtless enough and bad enough already; the human passions are outrunning all control in every direction; restraint, restraint, restraint, is what mankind want in everything!" Really, I must beg that those who undertake to speak on this subject, would give us something besides their vague impressions and inapplicable suggestions. Let them take some decided ground. Let them tell us what they *would* have. Men *cannot* labour or do business always. They must have intervals of relaxation. What is to be done with these intervals? This is the question, and it is a question to be soberly answered. It is to be met, I repeat, with answers, and not with surmises of danger. Men cannot sleep through these intervals. What are they to *do?* Why, if they do not work, or sleep, they must have recreation. And if they have not recreation from healthful sources, they will be very likely to take it from the poisoned fountains of intemperance. Or, if they have pleasures, which, though innocent, are forbidden by the maxims of public morality, their very pleasures are liable to become poisoned fountains. Is it possible to resist these conclusions?

True, we all wish to see a virtuous and happy society. The question is, how is such a society to be formed? Is it to be done by excluding all amusements from it? Is it possible that that mixture of healthful labour and cheering recreation, which seems so evidently Heaven's ordination since it is man's necessity, should be wrong? Can that be in itself wrong, which belonged to the very system of Jewish polity ordained by Heaven? I have said that the question is, how a virtuous and happy society is to be formed. But I am not sure that the real, ultimate question, after all, is not rather this, what is a virtuous and happy society? I am not sure but a very common opinion in the country, on this subject, is one which would exclude from its chosen sphere of life, all amusement, properly so called—that is to say, all games, sports, and spectacles. I am not sure but there are many, who, honestly and conscientiously thinking much of another world, and little of this, or thinking of this only as a wilderness of temptations, do

seriously hold that nothing is right, reasonable, or happy on earth, but direct, intent, religious action of the mind and life; who would exclude everything that they call gaiety from the world; whose essential idea of a happy society is of one that has its entire employments divided between labour and religious exercises; of one that has no intercourse but what is strictly religious, commencing and closing with prayer; and, in fine, that suffers every free movement and buoyant affection to be bound down under the closest rigours of a puritanic and ascetic discipline. This with many, I suppose, is a perfect, happy community. These are the ideas that belong to it—business, prayer, reading, conversation—and nothing more. If there is anything more, it must be recreation; and this admitted, there really can be no serious difference of opinion; because all reflecting men must be as desirous as they can be, that the recreations of society should be simple, pure, and well regulated. But if they do exclude all amusements from their plan of life, as I believe many virtually do, then let me ask if they do not err on their own principle. For their principle is, that they would have society the most religious possible; that they would have a society in which there should be the highest energy of virtue, and the loftiest elevation of piety. But is this to be attained by the exclusion of all recreations? Will the mind or the heart rise to the highest action of which it is capable, by being continually kept upon the stretch—I do not say continually in action, but continually upon the stretch? Will the bow send the farthest arrow that is never unstrung—that, even when laid aside to rest, is never unstrung? It is a conceded point, that the greatest amount of bodily labour is accomplished by the judicious interposition of seasons of relaxation. I know not how it is possible reasonably to doubt that this is equally true of the mind and of the heart. Tell me of a mind or heart that is always the same—I mean not in principle, which it should be—but the same always in act, and exercise, and state; and you give me the surest criterion and the clearest definition of a dull mind and heart. Tell me of a community in which there is no cheerful or joyous recreation, and you tell me—you tell all the world—of a dull community.

Whether something of this dulness is not stealing over the national mind—whether intent occupation is not weighing it down to an unwonted and unnatural seriousness—whether the one idea of business is not absorbing all the enterprise and enthusiasm of the great body of our youth, is a question which I have sometimes revolved with myself, however trifling it may seem to others. I was riding in a coach one day last year, with some young men from the country. They were on their way, I believe, to one of the great city marts. The conversation turned upon amusements; and I confess I was struck with the manner, so different from that of former days, in which they expressed themselves on this subject, and that with a tone as if they expressed the feeling of the whole community. With all the gravity of syndics, they pronounced certain sports and games of the old time, which I am sure were held in very good repute not many years ago, to be "undignified. They had other things to do, besides playing with bat and ball! They had other things to think of, at their time of life;" for they were all twenty-one years of age, I believe—voters, I suppose, and trading on their own account.

The seriousness of the national mind, indeed, throws difficulties over

the whole subject of recreation. It makes relaxation dangerous, and leads one sometimes to doubt whether holiday sports can be, with safety, introduced among us. I fear that recreation with us is actually more abused than it is among any other people. It is rare and strange, and therefore is made too much of, brings with it undue excitement and unreasonable excess. If men partook of *food* but once in forty-eight hours, hunger would urge them to a madness of gratification. The Romans, I am inclined to believe, are the gravest and saddest people in the world. I should judge so from their general appearance. But the carnival, when it comes to relieve the long pent-up passion for amusement, is a scene of the wildest excess, folly, and debauchery, in Europe.

I am sensible, indeed, that our people cannot be amused with such trifles as many of those which seem to satisfy the populace of Europe. Punch and Judy could scarcely get an audience in America. I am glad to observe that Lyceums, scientific lectures, and reading, are becoming more and more common resorts and reliefs from the toils of life. But these are still serious employments. They do not directly promote cheerfulness. They do not promote health. They do not give buoyancy. The man who is always either working, or reading, or hearing lectures, never suffers the bow to be relaxed. The national mind, and body too, if thus treated, must lose strength. Would the Greeks ever have been what they were, without their races, their wrestlings, their gymnastic contests?

Domestic life, especially in our country towns, is in distressing need of reliefs and recreations. In the winter evenings, there are four or five hours of leisure, to be employed in some way. Suppose that two or three of these hours are spent in reading. That is very well, and it is very common, too. But would it not be well followed with some recreations—games, or music and dancing? Would it not be better than to sink down into a dull stupor, or to go to sleep? There is too much eating and too much sleeping in this country, I verily believe, because there is too little amusement. Yes, and worse evils than these spring from the same cause. What would not happy homes do—happy evenings at home, with music, entertainment, cheerfulness, hilarity—to prevent many of our youth from straying into the paths of ruinous dissipation?

In fine, let me say that the influences under which a great people is to be trained up to intelligence, virtue, happiness, and glory, should be liberal and generous. Nothing should be omitted—nothing should be thought indifferent, which can contribute to the great end. The system of Providence is not a total-abstinence system. The plan of virtue is not a total-abstinence plan. The system of Providence is profusion: in nature, in life, in our affections, our passions, our powers, our capability, it is so—all is overflowing abundance. The plan of virtue, in this scene, is not, I repeat, total abstinence, but moderation. We are to use everything, enjoy everything, in the right place and in the right measure, and in the right season. We are not to extract enjoyment from life as men extract alcohol, and make it an intoxicating poison, bearing disease and misery in its train; but we are to take enjoyment as it is naturally mixed up with the scenes of life, with the fruits of nature, with the blessings and bounties of the whole creation.

In our position as a nation, in our natural situation as a country, things are arranged for us on a scale of equal magnificence, wealth, and beauty. Verily, we have a goodly heritage. We are placed amidst boundless plains, noble mountain-ranges, stupendous river-courses, lovely valleys, and scenes of perhaps never-surpassed beauty. May our national character take its impression and hue from these bounties of Providence, from this glory and goodliness of nature! May it be generous and liberal, may it be lofty and lowly, manly and beautiful, strong and graceful, powerful and free! May there be in us and among us, restraint without sourness, freedom without licentiousness, refinement without effeminacy, virtue without stoicism, and religion without superstition!

CHAPTER XXIV.

JOURNEY FROM PARIS TO LONDON — MALLE POSTE — STEAMBOAT — AMERICAN BOATS AND SHIPS COMPARED WITH THE ENGLISH — GENERAL PROGRESS OF THINGS IN AMERICA—ENGLISH ECONOMY—PANORAMA OF LONDON—CHANTRY'S STUDIO — THE TOWER — TUNNEL — GREENWICH FAIR.

LONDON, *March* 6.—Once more in England! Once more in fatherland! Once more surrounded by the blessed accents of my native language! It takes a weight from the heart, a burden from the senses, a spell from existence. The air into which the sounds of a foreign speech are for ever rising, is the very atmosphere of exile.

I came to Calais in the malle poste, and from thence in a steamboat. The first I found a very agreeable conveyance; the last, far less so than our own. The English ideas of comfort do not seem to have reached their steamboats. And, indeed, is it not very curious that England should suffer itself to be so completely surpassed as she is by America in all water craft—to be surpassed in ship-building—to be surpassed on her own element! I do not profess to be a judge in these matters; I only know from constant observation, that in the beauty and sailing of our vessels, we leave the English far behind. That the self-styled mistress of the ocean should permit this, is very extraordinary; and one asks for a special cause. The cause which I assign in my own mind, is the prevalence in England of long-established ideas and usages; while in our country, every innovation that comes in the shape of improvement, finds favour. We may have our faults and difficulties, and I do not, for my part, think lightly of them; but certainly there is not, and never was a country, where improvement has opened for itself a career so broad, unobstructed, and free. It pervades everything, from the building of a farmhouse and the ordering of a village school, to the planting of states and the forming of their constitutions. It is the very beau ideal of the country. To make a thing better than it has been made before—this is every man's ambition, from the humblest labourer to the highest artisan, from the maker of a plough to the builder of a manufactory. The *all-knowing* and inquisitive spirit of

our people, however unbecoming and annoying at times, is of service here. Invention is not the prerogative of genius among us; it is an endowment of the whole people. While the mass of the people in Europe is content to do, each man like his father before him—each man to plough, and reap, and build, just as his father did—the aim of *every* man among us is to do *better* than those who went before him. I am struck with observing what sacrifices to public improvement are continually made, and what risks are taken, among a people prudent and calculating as we are said to be, and doubtless are. I remember the time, a few years ago, when it came to be a settled point, that the building of turnpikes was an unprofitable undertaking. Everybody knew that turnpike shares always turned out to be bad stock. Well, I said with myself, there will be no more turnpikes made. But not so, by any means. Still these enterprises were engaged in. The people would have better roads; and they had them, without that grand European requisite, the aid of government. Government does comparatively nothing for public improvements among us; and yet they constantly advance, with a rapidity unprecedented either in the history or experience of any other nation. Our reliance for everything of this nature is placed on voluntary individual exertion—to an extent that many among us think unwise—and yet the result shows that we *may* justly put great faith in individual intelligence and enterprise. We are at this moment, according to the ratio of our population and means, building more railroads, and digging more canals; we are building more school-houses and colleges—nay, and we are, with nothing but the voluntary principle to help us, building more churches, than any other nation. We are building more churches than England, with all her immense ecclesiastical endowments and revenues. I know this, because I have seen it.

But to return to my steamboat—I observed that a considerable number of passengers carried a comfortable picknic box or basket with them, and spread their own table. With some, doubtless, this provision proceeded from a fastidious taste that feared some poisonous dirt would be found in the common fare of a steamboat. But with many, I presume, it arose from a habit, which presents a marked difference between the people of England and of America—I mean the habit of economy. In America we are ashamed of economy. It is this feeling which would forbid among us such a practice as that referred to, and not only this, but a great many more and better practices. In England, economy stands out prominently; it presides over the arrangements of a family; it is openly professed, and fears no reproach. A man is not ashamed to say of a certain indulgence, that he cannot afford it. A gentleman says to you, "I drive a pony chaise this year; I have put down my horse and gig, because I cannot pay the tax." A man whose income, and expenses, and style of living, far exceed almost anything to be found among us, still says of something quite beyond him, which his wealthier neighbour does, "We are not rich enough for that." One of the most distinguished men in England said to me, when speaking of wines at his table, "The wine I should prefer is claret, but I cannot afford it; and so I drink my own gooseberry." I have heard that many families carry the principle so far, that they determine exactly how many dinners they can give in a year, and to how many guests—

nay more, and how many dishes they can put upon the table, when they do entertain.

This frankness on the subject of economy is among us a thing almost unheard of. Not that we are more wealthy, but, as I conceive, less wise. The competition of domestic life among us is too keen to admit of any such confessions of internal weakness. We practise economy by stealth. Nor is that the worst of it; for one consequence of this habit of feeling is, that we practise too little. When a stranger looks upon the strife of business in our villages and cities, he imagines that he sees a very covetous people; but a nearer observation would show him that much of this eager, and absorbing, and almost slavish occupation, is necessary to sustain the heavy drains of domestic expenditure. It is extravagance at home that chains many a man to the counter and counting-room. And this extravagance is of his own choosing; because he knows no other way of distinguishing himself, but by the style of living. Would he but conceive that he might better elevate himself in society, by having a well-read library, by improving his mind and conversation, by cultivating some graceful but comparatively cheap accomplishment, he might live a wiser man, and die a richer. Who could hesitate to choose between such a family, and one whose house was filled with gorgeous furniture — where the wife and daughters are dressed in the gayest of the fashion, and the husband and father banishes himself the live-long day and half the night, from that pleasant mansion, to toil and drudge in the dusty warehouse? He *sleeps* in a very grand house; he *lives* in a counting-room!

March 8.—One of my first walks in London was to see the celebrated panorama in the Coliseum, as that is said to give a very good general idea of the city. It does indeed; and the painting, besides, is admirable; so much so, that one is tempted at first to believe that the houses, churches, and squares, are built of blocks — the relief to the eye is so perfect.

Chantry's Studio.—There is more of that naturalness of expression and variety of character in his portraits, which we find in the collection of *ancient* busts, than I have seen in any studio on the Continent. The cast of "The Child" is there, which gave occasion to those inimitable lines of Mrs. Hemans, commencing —

"Thou sleepest — but when shall thy waking be?"

and the model is touchingly simple and beautiful. My friend, Dr. Boott, introduced us to Chantry, and we had half an hour's conversation most agreeably sustained on his part. Here, too, we were introduced to Allan Cunningham, the author, who is the foreman in the studio.

April 3.—The Tower is more interesting from its associations, than from anything in its actual appearance. The stairs and passage from the Thames are still open, and certainly one cannot look without emotion upon the steps by which so many noble and princely victims have come up to this place of doom. We were shown the spot on which the scaffold was built for the execution of those who were in former days beheaded within the Tower. It is just in front of a small chapel, in which the condemned had the sacrament of the Supper administered to them before they suffered. Through that door, then, had passed

Essex, and Anne Boleyn, and Lady Jane Grey and her husband. Lady Jane Grey's apartment is *over* this spot, and commands the view of it. Those parts of the Tower, also, in which Elizabeth was confined by her sister Mary, and where the young sons of Edward were caused to be put to death by their uncle Richard, are pointed out, but the visiter is not allowed to enter them. Some of the buildings within the Tower wall—for it is quite a cluster of houses—are used as armories. One immense hall, more than three hundred feet long, contains in beautiful order one hundred thousand muskets. Others are filled with naval and military trophies. One of them is appropriated to the celebrated exhibition of kings and knights on horseback, dressed in ancient armour; and to be sure, the effigies looked grim enough. They must have had other thews and sinews than the men of these days, to wear such armour. But they were trained to it from childhood. We saw suits of armour—quite an entire clothing of steel plate, that is—for small boys.

April 4.—To-day I have visited the Tunnel and Greenwich. To reach the Tunnel, you descend by a circular stairway, one hundred and fifty feet, I should think. You are then on a level with the tunnel—which is a finely arched passage under the river, reaching, as yet, not quite half-way across. The work is suspended, at present, from want of funds. It is quite tremendous to think, as you walk along a beautiful road, lighted with gas, under an arch of hammered stone, that a large river is flowing, and mighty ships are sailing, above you.

The Tunnel is lower down on the Thames than the Tower; and Greenwich, the seat of the celebrated and very beautiful Marine Hospital, is farther down yet. I might perhaps describe the fine Greenwich park as well as hospital, if I had not visited them at a season which offered more entertaining matters. It was the time of the Greenwich fair in the Easter holidays, and I was very glad of an opportunity to witness some of the English sports, common on such occasions. They were certainly of a very humble description, like those of all Europe. It was chiefly a Punch and Judy sort of exhibition. Punch and Judy, indeed, *in propriis personibus*, figure among the principal performers on these occasions. We passed through a crowded street, half a mile long, lined on one side with small booths, for the sale of toys, trinkets, cakes, and gingerbread, and on the other, with successive stages, filled with mountebanks and low actors in harlequin dresses, bands of musicians, and troops of dancers. Other methods of entertainment were swinging cars, resembling carriages, which swung up fearfully high, till, indeed, no angle was left between them and the horizon—running down hill in the park—and a game, within a ring formed by the players, in which the principal business and result seemed to be kissing. There was a publicity and grossness about it, to which, I am sure no young country girl of ours, though of the humblest class, would submit.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE ARISTOCRATIC SYSTEM—ITS ESSENTIAL INJUSTICE—TORY ARGUMENT IN REPLY, CONSIDERED: THAT SOCIETY CANNOT GET ALONG WITHOUT IT; THAT UNDER REPUBLICAN FORMS, PROPERTY WILL LOSE ITS SECURITY, LAW ITS AUTHORITY AND DIGNITY, AND MANNERS ALL THEIR HIGH BREEDING AND COURTESY.

The great subject, I think, which a visit to England presses upon the attention of the American traveller, is the all-engrossing theme of the age—politics. The distinction of ranks, the difference of condition, the castle and the hovel, the lord and his liveried attendants, the idler and the labourer, continually present themselves to the traveller's notice, and provoke comparisons and reflections. America knows nothing of such marked contrasts. The idler, the lord, the castle, the entailed estate, the hereditary title to honour and power, have no place with us: and while all this falls in with the natural course of an Englishman's ideas, and seems to him, perhaps, as if it were among the ordinances of nature, it appears to an American, strange and unnatural, if not unreasonable and unjust.

There is no city in the world, perhaps, which presents, in broader contrast, the extremes of the human condition than London. Regent's Park, Grosvenor Square, the whole west end, shows like a city of the gods; St. Giles and Wapping appear like the habitations of devils. Men, women, live there, whose aspect, stripped of almost every lineament of humanity, fills you with horror, and hurries away your involuntary footsteps as you look at them. In London, there are twenty thousand persons, perhaps, who live in all the luxury that their imagination can devise; and there are twenty thousand who know not, when they rise in the morning, where they shall lay their heads at night.

The same contrasts, only in less striking forms, appear throughout England. If you take a journey into the country—no matter in what direction—you will soon find yourself travelling along an extensive park, surrounded by a high wall or hedge, running for miles in length. At a distance, within this magnificent domain, half hidden by embowering groves, half seen across the smooth-shaven lawn, you will descry the stately mansion; a flag, perhaps, floating from its loftiest tower, to show that the lord of the domain is at his castle; everything, indeed, indicating that he keeps the state of a prince. You turn aside, perhaps, to visit this abode of grandeur; you pass through a noble avenue of majestic trees, to the grand portico and portal; you are courteously admitted—you are taken through ranges of splendid apartments—you find them filled with the works of art and the devices of luxury, with paintings and statues, with soft couches, and gorgeous furniture, and costly libraries; you behold a scene richer, if mere cost is considered, than is often spread forth in the palaces of oriental magnificence. You are likely enough to retire from this fairy scene, in a mood to muse and meditate; and it will not be strange, if at every step and turn, you

meet with something that urges upon you, in some new form, the very questions you are considering. You take up your route again, and a few miles, upon one of the smooth and beautiful roads of England, brings you to a village, which presents another contrast to the splendour that surrounds the nobles of England. I certainly speak of this splendour with no unkind feeling; it spreads a fairy scene for the eye to dwell upon; I speak only of the fact. And for another fact of the same nature, enter the village inn, and listen to the news that is circulating there, and you will hear it announced, very likely, that the lord of the neighbouring castle is about to come down to the country; and it will be announced in a tone — I do not say disproportioned to the importance of the event — but yet in a tone as if to shake the whole country with the anticipated roll of his chariot wheels.

And now who *is* this personage, that cannot move without making all this stir and sensation in the country? He is a person, probably, who is not distinguished either by talent or virtue, or any other merit, from thousands of his countrymen. The consideration in which he is held, is conferred upon him entirely by the institutions of society. It is factitious; and it must be admitted, that in the same proportion, it is unjust to the rest of the people. There *is* an aristocracy of *nature's* ordaining; the aristocracy of talent, of virtue, of accomplishments and manners, and of wealth, against which no such objection lies. The distinctions of merit are but just to individual exertion, and they are beneficial to the whole people. There is the descent, too, of a good name, and of property, from father to son, which is the order of Providence; a special premium bestowed by Heaven upon good conduct. But that feudal aristocracy, that transmission of hereditary honour, protected property, and actual power, from generation to generation, which obtains in Europe, is, in theory, most manifestly unjust. It takes away from individual respectability and influence, to bestow them upon a favoured class. It depresses the many, that it may raise the few. It tends to deprive virtue of its just reward; nay, and of its *highest* earthly reward; I mean social honour, human approbation. Let it be proposed to any people to take a fifth part of their *property* from them to make a favoured class rich. Would they consent to it? Would they not say, that it was depriving industry of its fair reward? Would they not hold it to be intolerable oppression? But is property the dearest treasure in the world; the highest reward of good conduct that is bestowed on earth? Far from it. The respect of our fellow-beings is a more valued good. There is nothing on earth which men so earnestly and universally desire of one another, no reward of good conduct which they so eagerly covet, as respect, esteem, admiration. Now, it is this special, this highest earthly treasure, which the principle of a feudal aristocracy invades: it is this, of which a certain amount is taken from the people, to make a particular class among them great. Nor is this all; for it is equally true, that hereditary power is given up to this class; and it is equally true, though it may not be so directly manifest, that property is given up to it — at least it is *manifestly garnered* up and *kept* for the favoured class.

If any one can doubt about the essential injustice of this system, let me ask him to go back in his thoughts to the origin of society. Let me ask him to suppose that he, with a thousand other persons, all standing

upon terms of equality, were about to reconstruct society, or to establish a colony on some distant shore. Suppose this company assembled, at the commencement of their enterprise, to form a civil constitution. At this meeting they all stand upon a level. Now imagine ten of these colonists to propose that they should be made earls or lords; that they should be made an hereditary branch of the legislature, with a negative upon the wishes and interests of all the rest; and that, in order to secure their permanent respectability, they should be permitted to hold their estates in entail. A proposition very palatable and pleasant to the ten, doubtless; but could the rest of the company listen to it? I put it to the veriest Tory in the world to say, whether, as one of that company, he would listen to it. I put it to him to say, whether he would consent that lots should be cast, to determine on whom the mantle of nobility should fall.

It would be amusing—for seriously the case never can be contemplated—to consider the arguments with which the ten would support their proposition. "Good people!" they would say,

> "'Order is Heaven's first law, and this confessed,
> Some are, and must be, greater than the rest.'

Society cannot be constructed without its base, its columns, and its Corinthian capitals; *we* propose to be those capitals. You want objects to reverence; we offer ourselves to be those objects. We propose that your sons shall reverence our sons, and so on, in successive generations, to the end of time. Not that our sons will certainly be any better than your sons; they may be worse; their situation will be likely to make them worse, because they will be more independent of public opinion than yours; but then the great point will be gained—your children will have *something* to reverence; they may even learn to hold the splendid vices of ours in respect!—but then, the great essential point will be gained. Besides all this, the institution we recommend will be an indispensable restraint upon the popular will. You cannot be trusted with the care of your own interests; we propose ourselves and our successors as a house of lords to hold you in perpetual check." Now if all this would be ridiculous in a new construction of society, what is there in the consent of ages to make it any less absurd? Does the perpetuity of folly make it wisdom?

But I suppose it may be safely said that nobody maintains the aristocratic system to be strictly just. The Tory doctrine is, that it is expedient and necessary. That it is so for many nations, I admit. That government is to be constructed or changed, always with reference to the character and capacity of the people to be governed, is undoubtedly true. The question is, Are there any nations in modern times that can bear a more impartial system? Can human imperfection never be trusted with the trial of republican institutions?

This is a question on which the minds, not only of statesmen, but of many private persons, both in England and America, are most earnestly and anxiously employed; and one on which I shall venture to offer a few suggestions. My limits, the plan I am pursuing in these volumes, forbid any thorough discussion, even if I were capable of it. Hints are all that I shall venture to propose; and even these, I anticipate, from my habits of thinking, will bear much more reference to the perils of liberty, than to the evils and wrongs to which it is opposed.

I find in constant conversation, not only in England, but in America, that there are two parties to this great political question of modern times. That it should be so in England is not surprising. But I should be glad to ask the *American* Tory what ground he *does* take. Would he have an hereditary nobility and a king? If he would, if he is such a thorough advocate of the aristocratic system, that he would consent to throw himself into the commonalty, and his children for ever after him, then is he indeed an honest and consistent Tory, and he is entitled, doubtless, to employ every weapon of argument and satire against the popular system in America. But if he would not take this ground, if he is the friend of republican institutions in any form, then I would humbly submit to him whether the course he is taking is agreeable to the highest wisdom and patriotism. "Course!" he will say, perhaps, "he is taking no course!" That is partly what I complain of; for American Toryism manifests itself chiefly in irregular attacks upon the institutions of the country, rather than in any settled plan for their amendment, or improvement, or destruction. But then I conceive, also, that there is a *course* in conversation, as well as in action. "Well, and must not we talk? Is that your freedom?" Every man may talk, indeed, if he pleases; but that liberty, too, must be conceded to the atheist, the blasphemer, the corrupter of society. How *ought* a patriotic citizen to talk upon points that involve all the hopes of his country? I must think that the language of his *distrust* should still be kindly, helpful, and admonitory to the people, and not bitter and disheartening. I speak not this disrespectfully. If there be any one to whom my language might be thought to apply, who is my senior—more experienced, learned, and wise than I—to such a one I speak not. But if I could speak to the young men who are rising into life at this momentous period, I would say, "In God's name come to the help of your country in its great trial and peril; and stand not aloof, coldly to prophesy evil and ruin to it."

In short, I cannot understand the consistency of a man, who, having adopted the republican system in theory, practically gives it up to the Tory assailment, by admitting that our free institutions are too free for human virtue to bear; that all freedom bears in it the marks of inevitable destiny to evil. Let him say that he takes high ground, that he is a republican of the school of Washington and Hamilton; and I object nothing to his position. Let him say that all changes in government or in law should be gradual and cautious, and he will speak wisely. Lord Bacon, in his Political Essays, says, that "it is improper to try new experiments in the political body, unless the necessity be urgent, and the utility evident." And again: "Let all novelty, though it cannot, perhaps, be rejected, be held suspected."* Aristotle says, that "even the rust of government is to be respected, and that its fabric is never to be touched but with a fearful and trembling hand."† These are the wise suggestions of great and wise men. Improvement should be slow, experiments cautious, the popular tendencies carefully watched; but all this is very different from saying that they are tendencies to inevitable evil—a language from America most disheartening and provoking to the friends of popular liberty in the Old World;

* Essay xi. † Aristotle's Politics, book ii.

who say, "You have begun an experiment on free institutions, and you have not the courage to carry it through; you have invited us to follow, and you are yourselves pusillanimously giving up the cause; let it then be for brave and hardy Englishmen to do the work."*

But let us see what are these inevitable tendencies to evil. It is said by toryism in the Old World, and partly admitted by some political creeds in the New, that the people, if set free from prescriptive and aristocratic authority, will not long continue to respect the rights of property, or the authority of the law. It is a lesser count in the indictment, but in my judgment not a small one, that all manners and tastes, under republican forms, are tending to the level of vulgar insolence and ignorance.

The people will not respect property? Is that true?

It is easy to say it; but where is the evidence? Is it in America? We have been fifty years a nation, under the complete rule of this reckless and unprincipled multitude. Was property ever or anywhere more secure than it is in America? "But in America," it is said, "there is as yet no pressure of want, to urge the people to invade the property of the rich." Is there then in England any indication whatever of such a purpose, or such a tendency of the popular will? Some legislation there may and will be, unfavourable to exclusive monopolies of property, whether in church or state; but this will affect only that public property which ought to be held in trust for the welfare and improvement of the whole people. Some legislation there may be, that will indirectly bear upon the private fortunes of the rich. I would hope not; and certainly no such proposition has ever been entertained in America or England. I would hope not then, and yet I am willing to admit that some retaliation, some occasional wrong may be inflicted in this way. But that any civilized people, as a mass, should openly lay violent hands on property, seems to me, I confess, not within the bounds of any reasonable apprehension. I hear the language of this apprehension, but I listen to it as to men talking in their dreams. This enforced agrarian division of property would be an act so perfectly and plainly suicidal; it would be striking a blow that must so certainly and instantly react upon the striker, that no civilized and reading people, no people capable of a month's foresight, could possibly be guilty of such folly. Besides, in America and in England, who are the holders of property? The great body, eight out of ten, of that very people, who are to be struck with such unheard-of insanity, as to arise in its fury and destroy that very tenure, that very security of property, which constitutes all its value! Nay, I maintain that the rich few, and not the poor many, have always been assailants of the rights of property!

Indeed, this extreme distrust of the people, implying an equal confidence in the wealthy and noble, seems to be very ill justified either by

* Upon the dangerous tendencies of disaffection to the institutions of the country, I do not choose to enlarge. But as a hint to those whom it may concern, I will put down in the margin a sentence or two from Aristotle. "A great population," says he, "and that condensed in cities, makes the multitude feel, and enables them to exert, their strength. * * * The poor have nothing to care for; the rich are encumbered with the weight of their private affairs; and on every occasion so much outvoted, that they often cease to attend any assemblies whatever, either deliberative or judicial, thus abandoning their country to the licentious and lawless multitude."—*Politics*, book vi. chap. 6.

present events or past history. We have always read of despotic kings and grasping barons, who have sacrificed the property of their subjects and vassals to schemes of unscrupulous ambition or pleasure; but where has been the counterpart? There have been popular tumults, it is true. In sudden outbreaks of public indignation against the lordly oppressor, his estates have been ravaged. But where, I ask emphatically, has there been any settled plan on the part of the commons, to lay oppressive and unjust taxes on the rich or the noble?* In truth it would seem that something of this excessive jealousy of the many might be reserved for the few. Never was political power so little abused as that which has fallen, in modern times, into popular hands; while the history of monarchical and aristocratic power in all ages, has been but a history of its abuses. With such facts before us, I cannot account it rashness and folly to be willing to try the people; and this, especially, when their very multitude, their very divisions of opinion, the very strifes of party passion, are restraints upon their violence, and guarantees for their moderation and justice.

For my own part, I am not ashamed to say that my sympathies are with the people, that my sympathies follow where the mightiest interests lead. To me the multitude is a sublimer object than royal dignity or titled state. It is humanity, it is universal man, it is the being whose joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, are like my own, that I respect, and not any mere condition of that being. And it is around this same humanity that genius, poetry, philosophy, and eloquence, have most closely entwined themselves; it is embraced by the very fibres of every truly noble heart that ever lived. But not to dwell on considerations of this abstract nature, I look at facts; and facts, too, that are enough to stir the *coldest* heart that ever lived. I look upon this fellow-being, man, in the aggregate and in the mass, and I see him the victim of ages of oppression and injustice. I take his part; the tears of my sympathy mingle with the tears of his suffering; and I care not what aristocratic ridicule the avowal may bring upon me. My blood boils in my veins, and I will not try to still their throbbings, when I think of the banded tyrannies of the earth — the Asiatic, Assyrian, Egyptian, European — which have been united to crush down all human interests and rights. This is not, with me, a matter of statistics, or of political generalities. Down into the bosom of society, down among the sweet domestic charities of ten thousand million homes, down among the sore and quivering fibres of human hearts unnumbered and innumerable — the iron of accursed despotism has been driven! At length, from the long dark night of oppression, I see the people rising to reclaim and assert their rights. I see them taking the power, which to them indubitably belongs, into their own hands. I rejoice to see it. I rejoice, and yet I tremble. I tremble lest they should retaliate the wrongs they have

* Neither the agrarian law, nor the confiscations in the French revolution, as I conceive, invalidate the force of this question. The confiscations were only of the estates of persons who were emigrants, or of persons who, for that or other reasons, were considered as traitors to the country. I deny not the injustice of the French confiscations; but I deny that even they were deliberate, legislative attempts upon private property. The agrarian laws, since the work of M. Niebuhr on Rome, are understood to have applied not to private property, but to lands which were the property of the state.

endured. But yet what do I see? I see the people showing singular moderation. I repeat it—I see the people of France and England, in the great reforms which they have undertaken during the last fifteen years, showing singular moderation. Shall I not honour such nations? The people of my own country I know still better; and for that reason, probably, I honour them still more. I firmly believe in the general disposition of the public mind in America to do right. Faults and dangers there are among us, and on these I mean to comment freely; but that there is any general tendency to lawlessness and violence, I utterly deny.*

But there is another point in the Tory argument which I wish to consider. It is said that all reverence must die away amidst the rule of the many, and especially all reverence for the laws. This is indeed a most material point, and one that it most deeply concerns *our own* people rightly to apprehend, whatever use may be made of it by foreign critics.

What then *is the law*—as it is to be regarded by a free people? I answer, that law is the expression of the public welfare. The very reason of the law with us, is, not its antiquity, not its imposition by others, but its acknowledged utility, its adoption by ourselves. Law is the very expression, I repeat, the exponent, the image of the public welfare. Cannot freemen respect it as heartily, as other men have reverenced the will of an absolute monarch, or the power of an aristocracy, or the bayonets of a standing army?

On the duty and necessity of strict obedience to the law, I shall have something to say in another place. I speak now of the venerableness of law. The strength by which it is to be maintained, I allow, is a different thing. But ideas have been flung out, which touch the very foundation on which it is to be supported—I mean its intrinsic respectability. It is said, for instance, that the people will not venerate the creature of their own will—the thing which their own hands have made. This declaration, I think, involves a sophism, which greatly

* The friends of liberty in Europe, in their views of this country, are committing the mistake common to people at a distance—that of spreading a few facts which fill the newspapers, over the whole character of the nation. A cloud is rising here and there, and they are so situated, that to their eye the whole land is covered with darkness. A friend in England writes to me thus: "I wish you could restrain your lawless countrymen. They offend us by their violence and savageness. Much as I envy something of the condition of your countrymen, I prefer old England. We have learned wisdom through adversity. Our liberty has been wrung from the grasp of a proud feudal aristocracy, and we have learned to prize the blessing. Your liberty is like the mushroom, a savour to some, but a poison to others. Ours is like one of our native oaks, slow of growth, but graceful and beautiful with its gnarled branches. You want refinement, and elevation, and dignity—and poetry and loveliness." I observe, too, that Sir Robert Peel has lately, in a speech (at Tamworth, I think), made use of slips from our newspapers, to draw a picture of the terrible disorders of the country, and a weighty inference thence, against our institutions. Now what has given occasion for these strictures, friendly or unfriendly? Why, some executions without the forms of law, at an obscure place in the far West, called Vicksburg; and two or three mobs in our cities. And these outrages are to give a character to the whole country! Was not the whole press, the whole spirit, the unqualified condemnation of the country, arrayed against them? Unquestionably. As well might we lay the mobs of Bristol and Birmingham to the charge of the whole English nation.

needs to be exposed, not only for the sake of the argument, but for the sake of the public welfare. Men will not venerate, it is said, what their own hands have made; in other words, a free people will not venerate the laws, because they have made them. In this declaration, as applied to the subject in hand, there are two mistakes. In the first place, it is implied that law, in a republican government, and all that law is, is of human creation; that all the authority of law is derived from human will; which is not true. In the next place, this false meaning is further distorted by the false colouring of language through which it passes. The word "make" is commonly applied to the humblest exercises of human ingenuity. Men make ploughs, and scythes, and steam engines, and the wheels of their manufactories; and because they cannot venerate these, it is sought to be inferred that they cannot venerate the laws they make. It might as well be argued, that because the glorious works of art, that because paintings and statues, because immortal poems and ever-during temples, are productions of human hands and minds, therefore it is impossible that they should be objects of human admiration and reverence. Men *ordain* what shall be the law to them, or rather they choose the wisest among them to ordain it. In grave and deliberative assemblies, with much patient discussion and mutual concession, they ordain what the law shall be—not make it, as things are made in the turning lathe or on the anvil.

But the other is the greater and more serious mistake. It is implied, I have said, that law, and all the authority of law, proceed solely from the will of the people; that law has no dignity, no sanction, no binding force, but what it derives from the voice of the multitude. This is not true. For what, I repeat, is the law? It is the representative of the public welfare. It proclaims, protects that welfare. It demands our homage for this reason and no other. Has the public welfare no authority with us but what it derives from our own will? Nay, the authority of the highest power in the universe is no other than this: the authority of its justice and beneficence. Whatever, then, is just as between man and man, whatever is beneficent for the whole community, is clothed with the authority of God himself. It is not our will that gives the sanction to law; its rectitude, its utility is its sanction; this is made to be a sanction to us by the very power that created us. Our will only gives a form to law; it determines what kind of actions shall be held to be injurious to the public good, and shall be punished as such. And it is the consent, if not the expressed will of every nation, that gives the form to its government and law. Suppose the government to be despotic, or aristocratic, it cannot stand long but in the acquiescence of the people. And that acquiescence, unless it is blind and servile, is founded upon nothing but the sense of the public good—upon the conviction that it is better to take the government as it is, than to run the risk of change. This is the only intelligible sense in which any *king* can be said to reign "by the grace of God;" he reigns in the strength of this conviction concerning the public welfare. This is the only reasonable authority in the world. And this authority, I say, is stronger, and clearer, and higher, in a republican government than in any other. There is no form of authority on earth so respectable, so venerable, as that which a whole intelligent people has established for the public good. If any government can be regarded as the minister of God, if any form

of power can be regarded as the voice of God, that government must be the one which a whole people has chosen and framed for the general good; that voice must be the mighty and multitudinous voice of the elective franchise.

We are told that a people will not venerate the power which they themselves have set up, the law which they themselves have established. But what is the fact? I maintain that there never was a people in the world that paid more respect and veneration to the law than our American people. There are people who fear power more; but there is no nation where law is more thoroughly reverenced, more wisely administered, or more exactly executed. Our foreign critics may lament that some of the insignia of office, the ermine and the robe, are laid aside in our courts; and they may be right; I contest not this point with them—but dare they pretend that our simple and venerable bench of justice is accessible to bribes, or that it shelters fraud, injustice, or crime? Nay, and with regard to the fact, I go further, and I maintain, not only that the law is reverenced with us, but that it is less reverenced everywhere, just in proportion as men are less free. Look at the opposite extreme, the law of despotic rule, the blessed state of pure, unmixed, and unquestioned legitimacy, around which the imaginations of so many in the Old World, and of some in the New, are clinging. The Russian—does he reverence the law that makes him a serf and a bondsman? The Italian—does he entertain any hearty esteem for the power that grinds him to the dust? The Turk—does he venerate the arbitrary order that casts his neighbour into prison, or extorts from him half his possessions? The Spaniard—does he respect the alcade, as the humblest magistrate is, in his office, respected in America? On the contrary, a contempt for office, coupled with a slavish fear of it, is interwoven in the very literature of these nations. Despotic law, law whose only sanction is the will of a ruler, whose only reason is that it has existed for ages, is, to every sensible and acute people, a mockery and a cheat; it has lost all dignity with such a people. It may be terrible, but it is not venerable. It may be as dreadful as the guillotine of Robespierre; but so far will it be from being reverenced, that men will hoot, and mock, and dance around its most horrible executions. Slavish fear is not an element of true veneration. Hereditary and absolute power is not an object of true veneration. None but beneficent power is so. And surely the power most likely to be beneficent, is that which a people chooses and establishes for its own good. And I should not fear, on the ground of this observation, to compare our country with the best examples of hereditary and enforced authority abroad; with England and France. I believe that no clergy in the world are more truly respected than ours; no hereditary aristocracy more, than the natural aristocracy of our country the men of industry, talent, and worth; no government more than our government.

But there is another count in the indictment against republics. *They have no manners.* Even though property could be secured, and the law sustained, yet the graceful amenities of life, the beautiful ties created by mutual protection and dependence, the high-born dignity on the one hand and the lowly respect on the other—all these, it is said, will be trampled under foot by the multitude. Every man will stand stiffly up for what he calls his rights, for the social consideration and respect

which he conceives are due to him; and all glow, flexibility, and ease of manner, the finest graces of life, will be gone.

So much am I disposed to admit that there is danger of a decline, *for a while*, of national manners, that I am more disposed to turn to that quarter, than to the opposite point of defence. Yet I do conceive that there is a higher state of manners, than that which is produced by feudal distinctions. These courtesies of mere condition seem to me much better to befit the childhood of the world, than its maturity. They ought ever to exist between parents and children. Authority and protection on the one hand, and reverence and gratitude on the other, are here proper and beautiful. And so long as the body of the people are in a state of childhood, we feel that there is a fitness and a charm in the old feudal homages of the humble to the high. In fact, the perfection, the highest tact of manner, consists in its adaptation to circumstances and relationships. The manners of a lady's ignorant page to his accomplished mistress; the deportment of a feudal retainer or tenant-at-will towards the master who fed, clothed, and by intellectual superiority ruled him, would not become those who stand nearly upon an equality in intellect and the independence of condition. It would be absurd and impossible to keep up a style of manners directly at variance with the actual mental relations of men. If I had a servant whom I supposed to be very ignorant—with only half of the intelligence of a well-educated child, twelve years old—my deportment towards him would naturally assume a mingled air of peremptory command and protecting kindness, and I should expect from him unquestioning deference and implicit confidence. But suppose I should discover that my first impressions about him were founded in entire mistake; that he could read Greek, and was conversant with literature, and was every way as intelligent and cultivated as I might be. Is it possible that, on this discovery, no change would take place in my manners towards this man? Would not respect mingle with them? Or should I expect or wish precisely the same deportment from him, that I should from the humblest and most ignorant menial? Should I demand that he should forget everything else, all the dignity of our common knowledge, culture, tastes, and of humanity itself, in the bare circumstance that he was poor, and I rich?*

I suppose, indeed, that most men would say in such a case, Be no longer servant of mine. Few, perhaps, would have enough of the Grecian or Roman dignity, to be willing to have an Æsop, or a Terence, for a servant. Most of those who have been trained up to the habits and feelings of a feudal aristocracy, say boldly, that the common people ought not to be educated. We know very well what resistance the cause of popular education has met with in England. It would destroy the habits of dependence and subserviency. It would make the people rebellious to lawful authority. It would render the people, some millions though they were, immortal minds—no matter for that—it would render them less convenient instruments for some hundreds of

* "Ha, Will Shakspeare, Wild Will!" says Leicester, in Kenilworth, "'hark thee, mad wag, I have not forgotten the matter of the patent, and of the bears.'

"The *player* bowed, and the *earl* nodded and passed on—so that age would have told the tale; in ours, perhaps, we might say the immortal had done homage to the mortal."

their brother minds. The real question at issue was, and is, whether it is right and best that the body of the people should be raised to intelligence, self-respect, and self-dependence, or be for ever kept down to abject baseness and subserviency. The real question is, whether we will consent to look at this subject as *Christians*. For although I am well aware that Christianity did not, and does not propose, by any positive precept, to disturb the actual relations of society; yet no one will deny that it holds all men in an equal and impartial regard, that it is no respecter of persons, that it assigns to moral worth the supreme value, the highest title to respect, and that it reveals a world to come, in the brightness of whose splendour all earthly distinctions will be lost. I do not say that Christianity will ever abolish the distinctions of employer and employed, householder and domestic, rich and poor; for these belong to the inevitable condition of all human society: but I do say, that this religion will give to these distinctions a character of mutual kindness, consideration, and respect, which has never yet been seen in the *body* of any community. And could all men be Christian brethren, and treat one another as such, I believe there would be a gentleness and gracefulness in the universal manners of society, which no feudal distinctions, no mingling of patrician pride and plebeian homage, has ever produced, or ever can.*

With this contemplation of things, I cannot sympathise much with the alarms that are felt, at the probable decline of all the old reverence and courtesy. Suppose that everything *goes down*, as it is called, to republican forms; that all is levelled, aristocratic pride and kingly state together; will not truth and virtue, science and sanctity, humanity and Christianity, be left on earth? And will there be no dignity in paying homage to these? Doubtless there will be shocking things in the world—things unheard of, and incredible. Not only will "the toe of the peasant gall the kibe of the courtier," but people will stand face to face—will *meet in the same company and actually talk together—between whom there will be nothing on earth in common, but that they are men!* Alas! what a sad history will be written of those times! "Then," will it be said, "men were respected, not for their titles, but for their merits. It was an all-levelling age, in which nothing was venerated but virtue. Nay, so besotted were mankind, that they worshipped virtue and truth, though they were stripped of all outward magnificence and power. The highest places in society were sometimes occupied—proh pudor!—by poor men. Yes, it was an age in which the horribly vile aristocracy of talent and virtue prevailed. If there was a man of wisdom

* I have lately read the series of articles, in Blackwood's Magazine, on the life of William Pitt. The writer is evidently an honest man. There is an intensity of feeling pervading every page, which plainly enough shows that. I acknowledge, too, the extraordinary vigour and splendour of the style. But I must say, that the spirit manifested in these articles seems to me absolutely atrocious. By the "people," he means, according to his own definition, "the prodigious majority" of the English nation. This body of his fellow-citizens he constantly denominates "the rabble." Scores, if not hundreds of times, he insults them with the name of *rabble;* and in every page he pours out upon them the most cold-blooded and heart-withering scorn. And yet this man persuades himself that he is, *par excellence*, a Christian, and does not hesitate to denominate those who differ with him in politics, heretics, infidels, and atheists.

and genius among them men went mad about him; they seemed to feel as if his notice and friendship were as honourable to them, as if he had been a lord or a prince. Yes, *Christians* though they were, they fell towards the degradation of those Grecian and Roman times, when Diogenes was honoured in his tub, and Cincinnatus was called from his plough."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE REPUBLICAN SYSTEM—THE TENDENCY TO IT IRRESISTIBLE—AMERICAN REPUBLICANISM—NATURE OF LIBERTY—OBEDIENCE TO THE LAWS—MOBS—TRADES UNIONS—FREE INSTITUTIONS A SEVERE TRIAL OF CHARACTER—CONSEQUENT DUTIES, INVOLVING FIDELITY TO THE PRINCIPLES OF HUMANITY, COURTESY, AND CHRISTIANITY.

There is one view of the tendency to republican forms of government, which invests the whole subject of modern politics with a completely new character. THAT TENDENCY IS IRRESISTIBLE! Be it good or evil, encouraging or alarming; be it wisdom or folly—wisdom in which all good men should rejoice, or folly which all wise men should execrate—*it cannot be helped.* The progress of reform in England is not more certain in fact, than it must have been certain in foresight, to every thinking man, ten years ago. There are principles, concerning whose operation one may safely speculate in his closet. He who does not see, that knowledge, having once gone down among the people—which it never did before—will *never* turn back; and he who does not see, at the same time, that the spread of intelligence *must* sooner or later break down the entire system of unjust favouritism, whether in church or state, knows nothing of human nature. It is often said that the horse, if he *knew* his power, would not suffer himself to be driven and worn out in the service of another. Does not all the power in the world lie in the people? Are not the people beginning to learn and feel this? The horse is *made* not to know his power, on purpose that he may serve another. Is human nature made so? It is a shaded picture—that of the human heart—and men see everything else more easily! but let any one adjust his eye carefully to the magic glass of experience, and look upon that picture, and it will foreshow to him the coming fortunes of the world. From oversight of this, from the want of this insight, the age does not understand itself. The mighty power that is rising in the world is intellectual power; and the one engine that is to take precedence, if not place, of guns, and battlements, and armies, is the PRESS. The great age of educated human nature—not of educated upper classes alone, but of educated *human nature*—is commencing. But instead of giving this mighty element the chief place in the problem of the future, men are speculating about visible forces and agencies; about the power of armies, the strength of dynasties, and the barriers of *caste*. It is all in vain. It must be in vain, unless human nature shall be radically changed. It is as if a man, holding that it would be

better to have the earth for ever bound in the chains of winter, should set himself to rail against the all-dissolving warmth of spring. It is as if he should dispute—against the sun! Doubtless there will be disputings and railings. There will be checks and disturbances, attending this great progress of things, like the chills and storms that wait upon the advancing steps of spring. Many a blast from the winter of ages gone by, will sweep rudely over the blossoming hopes of the world, and threaten their destruction. The course of things will *not* be peaceful. The elements of the world will be in conflict. There will be overshadowing clouds; there will be many "a raw and gusty day;" the long imprisoned waters will sometimes burst forth in desolating floods. There will be oppositions and struggles in society; the rage of kings, and tumults of the people; but through all these the great year of the world will advance! And I cannot doubt—all agitations, and excitements, and trials notwithstanding—that a progress of things so inevitable, based as it is upon the very principles of human nature, springing as it does from such certain theoretical truths, involving such unquestionable rights—a progress whose origin is education, whose element is freedom, and whose cause is humanity—must, with all its difficulties and dangers, be a progress to good. To doubt it, would be, to my mind, to doubt the providence of the Ruler of the world!

But with us in America the question is not about tendencies. The result to which the whole civilized world is advancing, is, in our country, fully brought out. We have adopted the free system; and our main concern is with its practical working. The Old World has other and complicated questions to consider; old and new ideas, institutions, and claims, are mingling and clashing in the conflict of European politics; but to the New World is presented only one question, How shall the system we have actually adopted be made to work well? And in truth there is no duty which the press of our country owes to it, that appears to me of such transcendent importance, and none which deserves so sedulously to engage the attention of all thinking men in the country, as the attempt to awaken, direct, and guard the public mind, in the new and dangerous paths of experiment on which it is advancing.

If the age does not understand itself, still less, I fear, does our country understand its peculiar situation. Liberty seems yet to be regarded rather as a boon to be carelessly enjoyed, than as a trust to be faithfully discharged. It is rare to meet with any production of the periodical or daily press, that enters deeply into the moral and social, as well as political difficulties and dangers, which are inseparably connected with free institutions. The pulpit addresses our people, precisely as it would address the people of China or Hindostan—taking no account that ever I have observed, of the peculiar temptations, sufferings, discontents, and exposures of a community circumstanced as we are. Meanwhile, there are enough to prate about liberty—demagogues and party orators to tell the people continually of their power and importance—not of their duties—and the people, hearing little else, are led to conclude that their situation offers nothing for them to consider, but occasions for pride and gratulation. It addition to this, there is always a *vis inertiæ* in the body of every society, not disturbed by actual revolution—an indolent and passive habit of feeling, as if all must be well, which disinclines, and almost disenables us, from forming any

discriminating judgment of the peculiar exigencies and perils of our situation. That this is all wrong, that we have entered upon a new era in society, an era of as much peril as promise; that society among us cannot adjust itself to its new duties and relations, without much consideration and care, I think I distinctly see; and so thinking, I cannot but deeply feel, that a momentous experiment for happiness and virtue is passing over us.

I am quite aware that the ground which I take is not likely to be popular with any party. The attempt to defend free institutions will satisfy one class of thinkers; the acknowledgment of their dangers will fall in with the views of another; but many of each class, when they look to the counterpart of that which they approve, will probably say that I contradict myself, and forsake my own principles. This I am interested most earnestly to deny, for higher reasons than those which concern my personal consistency. For I conceive that the only true and safe basis for liberty, is that basis of equal immunities and dangers on which I put it. The ground I take, then, is this: that freedom is the greatest of opportunities; but that the great opportunity, with moral beings, always involves great peril. I see in this but one instance of a principle that is established in the moral government of the world. It were easy to conceive of a nature and of circumstances which would expose mankind to but one half of their present sins and sufferings. Cut off one half of their moral freedom; diminish equally the strength of their passions; take away half of their outward temptations too; and it follows, that the exposures to evil would be proportionably lessened. But would not all this detract just so much from their opportunities for moral advancement, and moral happiness? The gift of political freedom is like the gift of moral agency; fraught alike with capabilities and perils. Just apply this to the case of political communities. Take the lowest instance—that of a slave population. All the dangers arising from free and unrestrained action, and especially from the acquisition and use of property, are removed from it. Advance now to a higher condition; that of the peasantry of Europe. They have the rights of property, and a certain degree of personal freedom; but the more delicate questions about human rights, the fair human claim to respect and regard, all aspirations after the higher conditions and honours of society, all that unfettered competition of life, which exists among us, is nearly unknown to them. Now, suppose all these barriers to be thrown down, and a whole people to stand—I had almost said like gladiators, upon the arena of social equality and conflict—and what do we see? A boundless opportunity for the development and improvement of human powers—but an almost equally boundless peril.

The state of things in America has brought about a grand and novel crisis in human society. This crisis requires, I believe, that society should assume a new character. And that there are difficulties attending the adoption of this new character, that there are difficulties involved in the transition of society from an artificial to a natural and healthful state, is not to be denied, but freely and fully admitted. In the untried ocean upon which the world is advancing, there are, doubtless, conflicting elements, there are counter currents, and there may be storms: but, I repeat, we are embarked upon the

voyage, and the proper wisdom of these times is, not idly to rail against the tide that is bearing us on, but to keep a strict watch and a close reckoning, and to bring every energy, and to man every heart, to the great enterprise.

Society is entering upon new trials everywhere — in America it has already entered upon them — and they are of the most serious nature. They demand a discussion among us, which they have scarcely yet begun to receive. Power has fallen into new hands, and hands which are liable enough to abuse it. The relationship of man to man has assumed a new character, and the fair adjustment of the mind to this new situation, I repeat, will require a portion, by no means moderate, both of sense and virtue.

Let me offer some suggestions on these points separately.

Power has gone into new hands. The grand modern form of power is suffrage, and suffrage is becoming universal. In our country, it is so already. We live in that extraordinary, that unprecedented, and, I will say, that fearful condition, where the mind of the whole people is represented in the government; where everything is staked upon the character, the intelligence, and virtue of the people; where the interests of the empire are borne upon the wave of popular feeling. Popular feeling! how fluctuating — this is the constant language of many in Europe, and it is meet that we should hear it — "Popular feeling!" they say, "how fluctuating, how uncertain, how impetuous and uncontrollable is it! How selfish, how unreasonable is it — how inconsiderate, rash, and irritable — and how liable to break out into wild extravagance, into furious excesses, into storms of anarchy, that will sweep through every land, leaving nothing but wreck and ruin in its path! Popular feeling! what is it likely to be, but the feeling of one sectional interest against another, the feeling of the poor against the rich, and of the rich against the poor, the feeling of the ignorant against the wise, of vice against virtue, of licentiousness and misrule against all order and control — feeling without reason, without restraint, without any principle, or any regard or care for anything but its own gratification!"

This is the language of many wise and thoughtful men in the Old World; and it deserves to be heedfully considered and carefully weighed. "Would the waves of the ocean," they say — "would the waves of the sea, without pilot or rudder, or any guidance superior to their own tendencies, bear any ship safely to the desired haven! But you have put the fabric of your government upon the waves. You have based everything upon that most unstable element — popular feeling, popular suffrage!" This is the grand point of difference which the advocate of free institutions would find between himself and them — *they have no confidence in the people.*

I trust that, in our country, we are to show that the people may be confided in. I trust, we are to show that the interests of a country may be more faithfully kept by the many to whom they appertain, than by the few to whom they do not — more faithfully kept by popular intervention, than by despotic authority. But if we are to show this, we must see to it in season, and charge ourselves with this responsibility, and prove ourselves faithful, as no people before us has ever done, and as no people after us will ever have equal advantages for doing. We must see to it, that knowledge is built up, and religion promoted, and

virtue practised; and that every man be sober, that every man be vigilant, that every man stand upon his individual guard and watch, as if he stood a sentinel for the safety of an empire. Especially must we see to it, that the venerableness and sanctity of the law are sustained among us.

I have attempted to show that the law of a free people, the law which they themselves have made, possesses these characters in a peculiar degree. But it is not any abstract shadow of authority that I would set up. I say that such a law is bound upon the conscience, beyond all others.

If all the multitudes in our American republic were assembled, the whole body of them, almost as one man, would pronounce the law and the government which are established among us, to be good and beneficent. Then, I say, it is a matter of *conscience* to obey it. We have ascribed to this law an authority more than human. We have acknowledged in it that which gives authority to heaven itself — its beneficence. It is no longer left to our will to decide whether we ought to obey it. That is already decided. If we break the law, we are moral offenders. We are not mere technical or political offenders; not merely traitors, or thieves, or murderers, according to some arbitrary and unacknowledged rule; we are moral offenders; we are offenders against conscience; we are offenders against God; and we must answer it, not in a human tribunal only, but at the bar of an eternal judgment.

But possibly some one may say, "I do not hold a certain law to be good or right, and, therefore, upon your own showing, I am not bound to obey it." The objector forgets one essential principle of our political system which is as much a part of the law as any other. And that is the principle, that the majority shall govern. This is as evidently a necessary and beneficent principle of law among us, as any provision of the criminal code; and he who sets it aside, as plainly offends against the public welfare, as if he stole or murdered. For who does not see that the government cannot go on a day without this principle? If every man is to decide for himself what shall be law, there is an end of all law. Law for a country must depend upon agreement; and the nearest and the only approach to agreement, is to be effected by submitting to the majority. The business of an aggrieved minority is, to procure as speedily as they can, a change of the law. Resistance to the law involves a principle so fatal, that no temporary advantages can countervail its wide-spread mischief.

We have fallen upon times, when exact obedience to the laws — an obedience so exact, that it shall admit no disturbing interference of private judgment — is a subject that needs to be deeply considered. The disposition on the part of some of our citizens to take the law into their own hands — public executions without legal trial in one part of the country, and the riots and mobs that have spread terror through some of our cities, — these are things, though their importance is likely enough to be exaggerated, which nevertheless demand a fixed and serious, if not anxious consideration.

And the question is, What is to be done to restrain these excesses? And I confidently answer, that nothing can be done, but through a sound public opinion, through a universal and deep conviction spread among the people, that a religious reverence, and an exact obedience to

the law is our only safeguard. The only alternative is a standing army, and it is an alternative not to be thought of. Moral restraint, then, is the only expedient. And let us not think that we have sufficiently tried it. There has been a laxity of opinion among us, that has given some countenance to mobs, or they never would have risen to the strength and violence which they have attained in our country. There has been a want of consideration among us, concerning the necessity both of strict obedience to the laws, and of general moral restraint. We have been too secure. We have idly thought that our system must work well, because it is free and the people intelligent.

The action of a mob, and all action of bodies of men against the laws, is not only fatal in effect, but fatal in principle. It destroys the very end which a mob generally proposes to attain. For let us do the justice to those bodies of violent and misguided men, to say that they usually propose some good end. But the very principle of irregular and unauthorised interference destroys every good end of government and society. For who can be safe, if the passions and prejudices of infuriated multitudes are to decide upon his conduct? Who can speak freely as he ought, the truth, or his true and honest sentiments, if he is subject to such a tribunal?

No matter, then, how *apparently* just the occasion for this violent popular interference may be. There may be some urgent danger to be guarded against. There may be some detestable principle to be put down. There may be some abominable nuisance to be abated. But who, in his senses, would call for the corrective hand of a mob? Who that has ever once seen a mob, would not say, "Heaven rid us of such remedies!"

The trades unions subject themselves to the same censure, whenever they overstep the limits of the law. The prejudice of many against them is so violent, that they probably regard the very combinations as unlawful. But let it be considered, whether any body of people has not a right to assemble to deliberate and act for the common welfare. It never has been denied, that employers have a right to agree together, upon the wages they will give; certainly it must be admitted, that the employed have just as much right to agree together upon the wages they will demand. Doubtless, combinations of a particular class for such a purpose, or indeed for almost any purpose, are liable to do much mischief and much wrong. I regret them, for many of the same reasons that I should regret combinations among merchants and men of wealth, designed to act upon the fears or the necessities of the poor. It is the policy of our institutions not to separate, but to blend the different classes of society. Trades unions are a device of the Old World, naturally enough springing from fixed and repulsive distinctions of classes. The sensible mechanics and labourers of our country ought to see this, and to hold their hands from those association bonds, as they would from manacles. The man who aspires to a higher place in society, should take care how he links himself with a combination, which is likely to embrace the lowest and vilest of the community. He lessens his power by doing so; he lessens his free action; he lessens his chance of rising in the world. I appeal to any intelligent trades unionist, whether the body to which he belongs is not likely to be led by one or two demagogues, who have not more sense, but a greater gift

of speech than the rest, and whether it is not likely to be absolutely controlled by the poorest and most desperate of its class. With these, then, notwithstanding all his mental remonstrances, he must be confounded in the eye of the world. He ought to have something too much of pride for that. He ought also to reflect, that, although such a combination may be lawful in the outset, it is very likely to be lawless in the end. And when it does become lawless, when it assumes the character of a mob, when it breaks in with violence upon the peaceful labours of those who are still inclined to work for the support of their families, or compels them by threats of violence, to desist from their lawful occupations — then, I say, and I say it as much for the sake of the poor as of the rich, that there ought to be an armed police, strong enough to put a stop to such outrages upon the public order! I am, perhaps, as averse as any one can be, to such a remedy. But it would probably, in the end, save more lives than it would sacrifice in the outset; and lives of far greater value; to say nothing of the wives and children of these misguided insurgents, who are brought to the extremity of poverty and distress, to disease, and perhaps to death, by the idleness of their natural protectors — or who, perhaps, are begging at one end of the town, while their husbands and fathers are violently arresting industry, and destroying property at the other — one part of the family levying contributions for charity upon the very wealth, which the other part are laying waste by violence. But I said, that lives of far greater value were lost; and I mean those of our police officers. The policeman, too, has a family: and he goes from it in the morning, knowing, perhaps, that he has that day to encounter a mob. Can he do so without anxiety? Does not his family implore him, for their sakes, to take care of himself? But forth he must go. At the magnanimous risk of everything dear to him, he goes into that wild and lawless crowd. For the public safety he goes there. To shield the whole community from violence, he offers his head to the blows of an infuriated multitude. He falls: he sinks in the crowd; he is beaten to death! Is there no remedy to be used against such a cruel issue as this? Are the public justice and honour to sleep in supine indifference, or to shrink back in pusillanimous fear, when the faithful servants of the public are thus sacrificed to lawless violence?

We have had scarcely time yet, to set up the necessary guards against new and recent forms of popular violence. This is the explanation of that unexampled state of things, in some of our Atlantic cities, and some of our western towns, which is the wonder and ridicule of Europe. That public opinion is entirely right with regard to these enormities, is our security; for the public opinion in America is law. That this opinion will find out some way to repress mobs, and the murderous executions of the too far-famed, but not too odious Lynch law, I cannot doubt.* I believe that these things have no more to do with the perpetuity of our institutions, than the vexa-

* In a letter from Paris to the editor of the *New York American*, dated 14th January, 1836, the writer, speaking of the late horrible atrocities in Spain, says, "God forbid that the United States should ever witness such scenes of blood; but bad as they are, they are not so much dwelt upon by the press of Europe, as the Lynch law proceedings in the United States." It is all very well! Let the indignation of Europe be fixed upon such monstrous proceedings. If in-

tious stings of a wasp, or the irritating attacks of a swarm of flies, with the life of the mighty elephant.

Indeed, I do by no means so much fear for the permanence of our institutions, as for their effect upon the essential well-being and happiness of society. Even the dissolution of our union would probably leave unaltered the form of our state governments. Nor is it easy to anticipate or imagine any change in the national character, that would permit the creation of a nobility or of a monarchy among us. We are often told of coming ages of anarchy and blood, out of which is to rise a military despotism. We are admonished of the fate of the Grecian and Roman republics. I do not desire that the admonition should be scornfully resisted. Occupying as we do a new world, scarcely feeling any ties to past ages, taking counsel of innovation rather than of antiquity, dwelling more upon the bright visions of futurity than upon the sublimity of ancient time, we may be instructed less than we ought by the lessons of history. Still, I cannot help observing, when the examples of Greece and Rome are brought forward, that there are elements in the constitution of our society, which do not seem to be considered in this comparison. I mean those elements of mighty force—Christianity and universal education. They have formed a people in America, such as Greece and Rome never conceived of. This is scarcely a topic for argument; the conclusion here must be the result of observation. But when I look upon such a people as ours, enlightened as they are, and united in the bands of Christian brotherhood, I cannot help asking—and feeling, too, as if there was the force of argument in the question—Where are the elements of universal anarchy and bloodshed? I look at individuals—at those whom I know—at the body of the people in the country—and I say, Can this man and that man be induced to take his musket, and fight with his neighbour in the next state? Can Massachusetts go to war with Connecticut?—or New England with New York?—or the Northern States with the Southern?—What may happen five or ten centuries hence, I pretend not to predict. It is easy to deliver prophecies which are to wait centuries for their fulfilment or failure. With regard to the future, I know no safer augury than past experience. I repose, then, upon the, to my apprehension, undeniable fact, that the intelligence and the right-minded, religious feeling of our people, have been gaining strength, and are at this moment advancing more rapidly than ever before. Can this fact be denied? Certainly our schools and colleges are improving; and the number of newspapers, periodicals, and books—and readers—is increasing in a ratio,* far beyond the progress of population. Certainly the vices of

dignant justice will not otherwise awake at home, let foreign reproach arouse it. Yet, at the same time, let not our favourers or our adversaries imagine that Lynch law is the law of this country, or that it is ever likely to be; or that it *has* been, except in two or three instances of extreme local irritation and alarm.

* Most of the market-women who sell vegetables in the open markets of the city of New York, buy and read a daily newspaper. I suspect the world might be searched over in vain for a parallel to this fact; which is an illustration, also, of the spirit of the country. Let a poor man, moreover, go through the market with his basket, and those women will fill it. I remember the time, too, when this humble but meritorious class of persons was entitled to less honourable mention.—In Geneva, with twenty-five thousand inhabitants, there are

gaming, profaneness, and intemperance, have visibly declined among us. Certainly, the jurisprudence of the country, that great moral guage and safeguard of a nation, has improved, and improved, I am inclined to believe, beyond all example, ancient or modern. And once more I say, certainly there has been a growth of religious feeling in the country; a deeper interest in the subject is spreading itself among all classes of the people; the churches are more fully attended; the number of communicants is everywhere increasing. Nay, and I cannot help thinking that the preaching is better than it was; at any rate, taking my past impressions with me, I find it, wherever I go, better than I expected. Nor in regard to statistical statements of this nature, does it seem to me fair to reply with strictures or censures upon the religious zeal of our people. Such strictures are very proper in their place; but their place is not in a general estimate of this kind. The religious spirit of the country is strong; it is growing stronger; this is undeniable. And now, if all this be true, what, I ask, is meant by the charge of a national deterioration, that threatens the eventual subversion of our free institutions?

But I have been led, by these observations, away from the point on which I was about to insist. It is not the danger of destruction to our popular forms, that so much impresses my mind, as the trial of character which is passing under these forms. The danger that I should fear, if I were disposed to give way to gloomy forebodings, would be, that while the glorious fabric remains untouched, those who walk beneath it may not reap all the advantages of their favoured condition; that while the fair form of liberty is preserved, the very heart and happiness of it may be eaten out by "carking cares," by domestic competitions, by private discontents—by the jealousies, and distrusts, and vexations, that spring from ambitious aspirings, and undefined claims, and disappointed expectations.

I believe that there is (from certain causes) more suffering among our people, than among the people of any other country in the world! I begin with this assertion, and I make it thus nakedly, that it may, if possible, startle the reader into some attention. It will, doubtless, be thought a bold declaration; but I say it: I believe there is more suffering (from certain mental and moral causes) in our country than in any other. There may be more happiness, too; I am inclined to think there is. But there is positively more suffering.* Nor does this arise alone from the greater amount of intelligence diffused abroad among the mass of our people. It arises in part from the peculiar relationships of society among us. The higher and the lower classes, as they are called, sustain a less happy relation to each other in America than they do in Europe. Domestics are less happy, as a class, in America than they are in Europe. Does any one ask why? I answer, because in Europe, and wherever aristocratic institutions prevail, servants look upon their state of life as a permanent condition. In America every domestic is

one weekly and two semi-weekly newspapers. In the town of New Bedford (Mass.), with a population of nine thousand, there are three weekly and two daily papers.

* Of course, I should except cases of extreme oppression or poverty, like those of Poland or of Rome.

hoping to rise to a higher place in society. Hence he is restless and uneasy. Hence dependence is a thousand times more galling to him than it is to the European servant. He must be a dull observer, who does not see, I had almost said in a thousand forms of pride, petulance, jealousy, carelessness, unfaithfulness, and unhappiness, this grand difficulty attending the condition of the American domestic. Is the situation of the American householder, employer, man of wealth, compared with the European, any more fortunate and happy? On the contrary, the grand difficulty of the country, so far as comfort, both mental and bodily, is concerned, lies in the state of domestic service. There are exceptions, of course; but the general want of fidelity, attention, kindness, and respect in domestics, is a source of perpetual annoyance in almost all the families in the country. It is to be added, that there is less skill, less accomplishment, less heartiness, in the duties of any situation, where the occupant regards it with disgust, and is determined to escape from it as soon as possible.

It is easy to spread this general comparison into all the shades and details of the social relations. Those who are beneath, where all are free to rise, are looking to the situations above, not as places never to be reached, but, on the contrary, as prizes to be contended for. The sight of splendid dwellings and equipages, therefore, is likely to awaken, in many bosoms, envy and irritation, rather than kindness and deference. On the contrary, those who are above, look upon their inferiors in station as aspirants and assailants, rather than as friends and supporters. In this state of things, all the offices and relations of life are apt to become less kindly. In a country where there are no fixed and impassable distinctions, no protecting barriers of caste or coterie, men are apt to fear intrusion, or else to fear lest they be thought intrusive. Hence, I think, the proverbial distrust and coldness of our manners. And hence, I fear, a want, to some extent, of real heartiness, confidence, and enthusiasm in society.

Do I say, then, that this state of freedom is undesirable? By no means. The most desirable condition for a people, is not that which embraces the greatest immediate comfort, not that which presents the fewest annoyances and difficulties, but that which tends to the greatest ultimate improvement. It is the order of Providence, it is the discipline of our moral nature, that the process of improvement should involve much suffering. The result is happiness; and for that happiness I am looking. But the process, I repeat, is usually trying and difficult. It involves many moral efforts, many severe struggles, many painful questionings. Doubtless it would be more *comfortable* for the master to hold his servants in a state of absolute dependence, so that they should cling to his service as their only means of support, so that they should have no wish, will, or thought, but of implicit obedience; but would this be the *best* state of things for *them*, or even, morally considered, for himself? Doubtless the ignorant peasant, whose thoughts seldom wander beyond the plantation on which he toils, experiences less care and anxiety, and is less tried with questions of social precedence and position, than the independent citizen, who has the world before him where to choose and who knows of no world above him to which he may not aspire. Doubtless, the slave suffers less, mentally and morally, than his master. Push the comparison something further, and you will find a

race of beings that does not suffer at all—animals. Now, advance animals to the state of Hottentots, and Hottentots to the condition of serfs, and serfs to the situation of the modern peasantry of Europe, and a peasantry, tenants at will, to the privileges of free citizens; and at every step you open new sources both of enjoyment and suffering. And the relative degree of enjoyment and suffering, in each state, will be in proportion as the duties of that state are well or ill understood and practised. The more novel, and, in its principles and modes of action, unsettled any condition is, the greater will be the suffering.

Now this I consider to be the condition of our American people. Our political institutions have placed us in a new school, and most of us are yet upon the first form. The Greeks and Romans were not in such a school. The ancient liberty differed almost as widely from our modern freedom, as the aristocratic system itself does. Greece and Rome, crowded with slaves, experienced but few of the peculiar trials of our social condition. The private relations of life among them were more fixed than ours; while at the same time, their popular forms of government were less secure. They were less secure, because the basis of society on which they were placed was not the basis of truth and justice. And I cannot help adding, that, in this respect, we enjoy an advantage over all the modern governments of the Old World. While the right tendencies of mind with us are all conservative, the right tendencies of mind in the European states—the tendencies, that is to say, to diffused knowledge, equalized property, and free thought—are all destructive of their respective governments.

But not to pursue this point—I say that we are placed in a new school. We are learning, from trying experience, many important lessons. Our education has not yet come to its end; and our system, like every formative and disciplinary system, is to be judged of with this just reservation. There *are* systems of education which are occupied with immediate results; there are systems which look to future issues. Ours is of the latter kind. We are in a state of transition. Like our noble forefathers, we are, in some important respects, "living for them that shall come after." Society in America is contending with many difficulties; it is necessarily sacrificing much immediate comfort, for a magnificent result hereafter. I say a magnificent result. For no vision of patrician honour and plebeian humility, of lofty command and humble service, of baronial dignity and obsequious respect, of generous protection and grateful dependence, of titles, coronets, stars, and banners, with the lowly homage of a surrounding multitude—no such vision, though it may charm the reveries of a poetic imagination, can be so glorious as the spectacle of a great people, living under the gentle rule of impartial law—each one's welfare equally cared for by the paternal state—each one possessing all the liberty that equal laws can give, for pursuing his own improvement and happiness—each one respecting himself and his fellows as moral beings, subjects alike of the majesty of Heaven; no oppression bowing down the weak to the strong, the friendless to the favoured—no lordship, but that which a man shall make for himself—no power but for the common weal—no end but universal happiness. Herein lies the true nobleness and charm of society; in its impartiality, in its justice—not in sacrificing one part to the comfort or respectability of another—a system degrading to all; but in the im-

provement, happiness, education, of the whole body of the people. And were it not for the yet unexhausted heritage of false, feudal maxims, which past ages have sent down to us, no noble-minded man would be able to see things in any other light: no lofty imagination, nor poetry, would have thrown their charm over a system of oppression and cruel injustice. It is to be remarked, indeed, that poetry, when she has made princes and nobles her theme, has touched the heart chiefly by portraying their humanity, their gentleness, their kindness to inferiors. The *condescension*, alas! seems to have been the grand theme. It *has been such a wonder*, even to poets, that *a man should be a man!* This perversion of almost all genius — this prostration of all truth and right, before power and state, is one of the heaviest indictments to be brought against the entire system of aristocratic distinctions.

Possessed, through a long hereditary descent of opinion, of these views, so favourable to the few, so disparaging to the many, we are, perhaps, but ill qualified to judge fairly and philosophically of that process of improvement, of which I have been speaking. It is necessarily wrought out through much imperfection; the people, in their new position, are committing many mistakes; and not a few of the lookers on, passing by, apparently, all the destructive errors of past times, give themselves up to the dread and the denunciation of these popular mistakes and excesses. They discern not, I am tempted to say, the signs of this time. The upheaving of the popular mass offends them. The growing independence, the insolence, as they regard it, of the lower classes, disgusts and alarms them. Trades unions, those natural, and often, doubtless, misdirected struggles of the poor and labouring classes to better their condition, are to them utter abominations. Those placards which they sometimes see in our cities, appealing to the worst passions of the poor, against the rich, read to them like fearful handwritings upon the wall, proclaiming that the days of liberty are numbered. Now I regard all these things as among the unhappy, but unavoidable processes of the great modern experiment on free institutions. The people, after all, are by no means committing such errors and injuries, as kings and nobles have done. I believe that all will eventually come right. To this political optimism I would hold fast, till I am beaten off by those shocks and convulsions of society, that shall whelm all in one common ruin! Heaven avert them!

And that they may be averted, that the experiment may come out well, I admit that we all have duties to perform. Nay, more, and I believe that Providence has it in charge — that our very situation gives some pledges that we shall perform them. Our very comfort demands, our very necessities require, that we should learn anew the duties of humanity, of courtesy, and of Christianity. And these are the particular duties to which I refer.

We are obliged to give to the claims of humanity, of the mass of mankind, a place which they never before held. The demand is urged by an irresistible power — the power of the multitude. It claims to have its rights, its interests, its feelings respected. It will no longer do among us, as is yet done in England with amazing frequency, to call this multitude a worthless rabble. The demagogue will indeed take advantage of this state of things, and the crowd may be, to some extent, misled by him; but it is the demagogue that is corrupted, rather

than the crowd; I believe that the heart of our people is yet sound. An intelligent people may err, but can it wilfully err? Can it harness itself to the demagogue's car, for the sake of drawing it?

It is sometimes petulantly said, that, in domestic life, the real masters in America are the servants. Here, too, is error, doubtless on the part of the great class of domestic assistants. Can anybody wonder that they commit this error? And is it not better that their claims, as human beings, should be enforced by some unreasonable exactions, than to be never regarded at all? The domestic is not, in this country, as he has been in the Old World, a mere instrument in the hands of another. He is to be considered, respected, felt for, as a human being. Let him be so regarded, let him be treated with kindness, let an interest —aye, a Christian interest—be taken in his mental and moral improvement, and the state of our families will be made happier, by every step of that progress in the morality and piety of domestic life. That progress must be made. I lament not that Providence has taken a bond of society, that it shall be made!

Will not courtesy be promoted in an equal proportion? Let the relations of life be just and kind, and kind manners will be the consequence. Let the members of a family take the proper interest in one another, as human beings, as alike children of God and heirs of heaven, and I will answer for their manners—yes, and for the manners of the humblest of its members. What is the beau ideal of a servant's character and manners in England, or wherever else aristocratic institutions prevail? That he is apt and obedient, attentive, respectful, and grateful; that he is a useful instrument, a serviceable person, true to his master. "It is a good creature;" and the master, and the mistress, and their children, are well satisfied, because this person—the old butler, the attentive footman, the kind nurse—is living for their comfort. Does it enter at all into the aristocratic contemplation of this faithful dependent, that he should live for purposes of his own—for purposes proper to him as a human being; that his own powers should be cultivated, his mind enlarged, and that he should cherish as true a self-respect as his master does? I am not speaking of what individuals may do—there are exceptions to all rules—but I am speaking of the general judgment and feeling of society in England, and France, and Italy.

I have known instances in America, where the relation of employer and employed, of householder and domestic, is, to my view, altogether more beautiful than the beau ideal of that relation in the Old World; where the superior in station says of his inferior, "I respect that person just as truly, and just as much as he respects me, and with just as good reason;" and where he treats him accordingly; where that treatment, moreover, has won, in return, a noble confidence and love: and where, in fine, the inferior stands up in his proper dignity as a man—where his manners are respectful and obliging, not because he is afraid of losing his place, but because he respects himself too much to be rude and discourteous to others—where his good manners stand on the just and firm basis of moral affection and mental culture. That is a beautiful relation. It is a relation that becomes men and Christians. It is the only suitable relation for beings, whose ties as a family are soon to be dissolved, and who are to stand as equals before the throne of their common Creator and Judge!

In a country like ours, it is time that some of the old maxims of feudal societies should be done away. The horror of being thought poor and dependent, the dread of being confounded with inferiors, the contempt visited upon the necessity of labour, the scornful reference to certain trades and occupations which infects even our literature, should give place to higher maxims. Make any occupation contemptible, and you take the most direct way to make those engaged in it reckless and vicious. Does not observation verify the remark? Those incognito female working establishments — so to call them — which are known in some of our cities, are a libel on virtuous industry. I do not so much blame those who desire to spread around them this shield against the absurd maxims of society. The wrong lies in that spirit of society which creates such establishments. They stand in a civilized and Christian country, like the guarded old feudal castles — relics of barbarism. It is a curious illustration of the absurd perversions of sentiment, which feudal distinctions have wrought in the world, that idleness — the not being obliged to labour, or study, or to do any useful thing on earth — should have been held to be the most honourable of all positions in society. Nay, the very dependents and menials of some lordly idler have sometimes, by reflected honour, taken precedence of the most honourable and learned professions. Mr. Edgeworth, in his Letters on the Choice of a Profession, argues against that of a clergyman in England, on account of its frequent want of respectability. And by way of illustration, he relates the anecdote of a curate, who was so elated at possessing the acquaintance, not of the lord of a neighbouring castle, but of his butler, that he observed, concerning that distinguished personage (the butler), "that he was so familiar with him, that he could say anything to him."

But for the correction of all errors, and the remedy of all evils incident to our situation, our chief resort must be to the principles of the Christian religion. Our situation is thus far fortunate, that it urges these principles upon us, as it never urged them upon any other people. The relations of society with us are brought down to the bare and simple character of a connexion between man and man. Heart to heart we are brought; and there is not a star, or a badge, or a strip of livery on any man's bosom, to teach deference to one, or to entitle another to the tone of authority. The privileges of rank, the instinct of discipline, the bonds of necessity, are all broken and abrogated. All artificial barriers are removed; the leading strings which have served for the guidance of past times, are completely taken away; and we are placed in the open and unobstructed field of equal rights and fair relations. What now can stand us *in stead* of all that has controlled and coerced the manners and actions of men hitherto, but the laws of rectitude, kindness, and forbearance—the laws of Christian self-respect, and Christian mutual respect? The basis of theoretical equality on which we stand, is really the ground of Christianity. Will not our privileges, as a people, teach us our duties?

It is only under this influence, that the relation of man to man, and the relation of the whole body to each individual, can be safe and happy. A poor man with this spirit, would say, "I am willing to perform a stipulated service for my rich neighbour; I feel no degradation in the employment; it is my mind only, not my employment, that can degrade

me; it is envy, or jealousy, not labour, that is degrading; I respect myself, my soul, my hope, too much to be contending about comparative trifles; nay, according to the Christian law, I love my neighbour too much, and I hold my fellow Christian in too much honour, to think of any injury or indignity to him; let him be honoured according to his merits; let him be prospered according to the good pleasure of God: I am thankful for his welfare: I am happy in my own." What a lofty-minded labourer were that! He might walk behind the plough; but the conqueror in his triumphal procession never walked in a path more glorious. Let the rich man reciprocate that noble feeling, assuming nothing unbecoming the relation of one Christian man to another, thankful for his prosperity, and humble, not proud, under it; and what a state of society would this be! What manners, what graces, both of character and behaviour, would spring from it!

And then, again, as to the influence which the whole body of the people—the mighty majority—possesses over the welfare of each individual—it needs to be subjected to the same control. Public opinion in America is a power fearful to contemplate. There is no aristocracy with us, no throne that is above it. It must be considerate, liberal, and candid, or it will inflict extreme misery and injustice. We have escaped in America from the despotism of the one, and the few; it remains to be seen, whether we shall escape the despotism of the many. Nay, at this moment, and with all our boasts of liberty, there is less private and social freedom in America, than there is in Europe! In some respects this is well; but surely not in all respects. The sovereignty of the many, the sovereignty of public opinion, may become as oppressive and vexatious as ever was the jealousy of arbitrary power. It may beat down all manly independence, all individual freedom—and especially in those who seek for office, or are ambitious to stand well with society; it may make slaves of us as effectually, as any tyranny that ever existed. It may make us a mean, tame, time-serving people, who shall not dare to do anything, even in trifles, that is contrary to the popular will. I confess, that in this view, I look with considerable apprehension upon those great associations, which, however good their end, create a public opinion about their objects, that renders it hazardous to any man's reputation, to dissent from them. I fear that under this influence, charity, and all the virtues, will be liable to lose something of their manliness, freedom, and beauty; that they may become, to some extent, hollow-hearted, and false—that charity may be promoted at the expense of real generosity, and temperance at the expense of sincerity, and much seeming good at the expense of much secret evil.

Here, then, we want firm and liberal Christian principle, to withstand these dangerous tendencies. We want it to enable some to set themselves firmly, whether in politics or religion, against the popular will. Yes, we want men who will sacrifice themselves—who will be martyrs—rather than sacrifice their own free and single-minded judgment. I might hold such a man to be wrong in his opinion; but unless he were very wrong indeed, I should set off his independence, in the account of social influences, as more than a balance for his error. Error can be corrected; but mental slavery seals and locks up the very fountain of truth. We want newspapers that shall dare to be true to individual conviction. And would that there were such a thing as an independent

party in politics—that useless, worthless, powerless, contemptible thing, as the mere politician would regard it—yet it would do a good that the politician does not think of. It would set an example worth a thousand party triumphs. And I fancy, too, that it would act as a balance wheel, to control the violence of party movements. The old Roman virtue consisted in the devotion, the sacrifice of the individual to the state. The redeeming virtue of modern liberty must consist in the devotion, and if need be, *the sacrifice of the individual to* TRUTH! And let me add, that the supreme danger to apprehend, is that of *losing all mental and moral independence!*

CHAPTER XXVII.

JOURNEY TO LIVERPOOL—SENSITIVENESS OF AMERICANS TO PUBLIC OPINION ABROAD—FAREWELL TO ENGLAND—PASSAGE TO AMERICA.

BIRMINGHAM, *April* 12.—From London to Birmingham I have ridden through a country clothed with living verdure. And yet England is several degrees north of any part of the United States; and this is April. The verdure now is of one deep hue. It is very different in Summer. When I came to Liverpool last year, I was struck with the light green of the fields on the banks of the Mersey. It may have been caused by recent mowing. What attracted my attention afterward, in travelling through England, was the variety of shades upon the landscape. I presume that this arises from the greater variety of grasses, grain, and herbs, cultivated; and also from a more perfect cultivation, that gives to the scythe and the sickle more frequent crops. The country wears every livery of green, from the darkest to the lightest, through the whole Summer. Oh! those rich glades; those noble groves and clumps of trees on every hillside; those cliffs, with their soft screening of ivy; those velvet lawns, with many a sunny nook and shaded avenue, sweet enough to draw the footsteps of the fairies; those embowered cottages; those glorious parks; those magnificent castles—*shall* I not—shall I *never*—see them again?

The lowest class of operatives in Birmingham and Manchester is said to be the most desperate and dangerous population in England; and I was very desirous to see a specimen of it. So I said to a gentleman here one day, "I want to see something of this horrid population in Birmingham, that I hear so much about. Pray, take me, now, to the worst part of your city." He paused in his walk and looked at me, as if he did not at all comprehend my meaning. "Why, you know," said I, "these desperate operatives—these people that are sunk so low, as I am told, in poverty and misery. Mr.——and Mr.——, spoke of them as if they were wild animals, that, if uncaged, would break forth, and devour, and destroy, on every side; and would be almost justified in doing so." The gentleman looked at me with a surprise that would have been displeasure, I think, but for his politeness. "Indeed he knew of no such people in Birmingham. He could take me to no such place. —There," he said, pointing down a lane that was swarming with women and children, ill clad and dirty enough to merit a pretty strong description—"there are people as poor and miserable as any, perhaps, in Bir-

mingham, but they are neither desperate nor dangerous." *They*, perhaps, if consulted, would have told another story! Heaven forbid that events should!

But it is curious, though natural, this habit of seeing things connected with ourselves, under aspects so widely different from those which present themselves to a stranger, or a distant observer. It really requires an effort of philosophical abstraction, to break that spell of association by which we make ourselves responsible, in a sort, for everything that belongs to our country or our town, to our class, sect, or coterie. For this reason, the unprejudiced stranger, or traveller, is, in the proportion of his knowledge, likely to be nearer right than the people of the country which he describes.

But it is a poor rule that will not work both ways; and there is no doubt that we might well take home this observation to ourselves in America. The Trollopes, Halls, and Hamiltons, have certainly told us many truths; by which, it may be hoped, that our manners, at least, will be mended. Nations have habits like individuals; they have eccentricities, which propagate themselves by the mere force of habit and custom, without any original reason. I am sure I know of nothing in our climate, or constitution, that accounts for that abomination, called spitting; many among us are as free from it as any other people. That we are somewhat given to talking of invoices and prices, has, indeed, an intelligible cause; it "cometh of the multitude of business;" and the fearful rapidity with which we eat our dinners, especially in public places, proceeds, perhaps, from the same cause. We are a business people, in a sense which does not, and never did appertain to any other people. Every man with us has a stake in what is going on around him. This must, of course, give a turn to general conversation, and produce an effect on the general manners and character. It may do evil in some respects; but it is certainly the spring of many energies. If you put a man's fortunes into his own hands, you put a life into him, which, though it *may* do harm to his manners or his morals, is certainly better for a country than to have one large class in it, above the cares of business, and another and larger class, like the operatives of Birmingham, sunk far enough beneath its profits. Better, I say—better, that is, for the development of the energies of a whole people—better for the promotion of ultimate general happiness, and I believe of virtue, too, I believe it, and yet the universal competition and success of business in America, expose us to many dangers which are certainly to be regarded with a serious eye. I could wish that the strictures of our foreign brethren, on all these points, could have come to us with something less of extravagance, that they might have done us more good; that they might have wounded less, and worked more kindly for our improvement. But thus it is, that imperfect beings must help one another, through much imperfection. Minds are flung into the fermenting mass of public opinion, to struggle together, and to strike many a rash and passionate blow; but out of error shall come truth, out of conflicting prejudices pure reason, out of darkness and confusion, light and order.

Our national sensitiveness under such blows, deserves, perhaps, more consideration than it has received. Our situation has been peculiar. No other nation has had its temper put to the same trial. Our country has been a sort of *terra incognita* to the civilized world. The new

forms of society and of political constitution in America, have been the subject of the keenest foreign scrutiny. We have been obliged to be passive in the case—placed upon the table, with half a dozen surgical operators around us, who amuse themselves with our wincing. Quite surprised they are that we feel the knife so much; and the irritation of the patient they count a very good joke. Let them take our place, and they might find the difference between operating, and being operated upon. The truth is, there has been no fair exchange of blows. We *read* everything that is written about us; we pay that compliment to foreign criticism, and to the literature of older nations. But *our* productions do not obtain the same currency with them. Nor have we the same number of needy and idle gentlemen to go abroad, with an intention to pay their expenses, and put money in their pockets, by writing an entertaining story, or a clever satire upon the people they visit. Besides, is there no sensitiveness in England or France to foreign opinion? Half of the wars between those nations, have found more than half of the original prompting and long continued exasperation in the irritation occasioned by their mutual contempt. And yet they are nations standing in no peculiar position before the world, possessing a known character and established reputation, and feeling themselves entitled to return, with immediate reaction, blow for blow, and scorn for scorn.

Our situation has been different. We were a new people, under novel circumstances, rising to take our place in the society of nations. We did not know exactly how we were to be received by the old families around us. America, though she knew that her children were essentially well-instructed and well-bred, yet felt, that they were not, perhaps, so well trained to the conventionalism and *bienseance* of the *beau monde*, and she did not like it, that Mr. John Bull—a haughty, and self-sufficient old gentleman, on the opposite shore—or that dowager old lady across the Straits of Dover, should stare superciliously, or toss the head disdainfully, when they passed by her.

Nor is this all. We are warmly attached to our political system. We have a sentiment of loyalty about it. The constitution is our king. And I hold this warm sentiment towards a mere abstraction that can confer no titles nor pensions upon us, to be quite as respectable as loyalty to a king; even without supposing what a clever English writer fancies to be true—viz. that the love of the king is only a sort of reflected self-love: being, he says, an intense pleasure in seeing a being just like themselves, clothed with such majesty—the very apotheosis of poor, common-place humanity. At any rate, I think we have a right to claim some consideration for this feeling about our political system. And it is precisely this that is both directly and indirectly attacked by our critics abroad. It is this especially that we defend, when we resist the assaults that are made upon our national character. And we think that we are bound to defend it, if anybody is; and that for higher reasons than those which concern our national reputation. We believe that it is a good system: and we, too, have set in modern times, the first example of adopting it. It is the very post, in fact, around which the war of public opinion is to rage, for a century to come; and ill would it become us to shrink from our part in the contest. Heaven grant that we may do something better than

dispute!—that we may furnish that best of arguments for the popular system, an illustration, in our own example, of its benefits!

That we may do so, I am willing to give a hearing to all reasonable admonitions from abroad. It is evident, indeed, that a new form of public opinion is rising in the world; nations are to stand at its bar. Hitherto, public opinion has acted chiefly within the boundaries of the countries and states where it has existed. It has been a most efficient and useful power, on the part of the people, to control the government, and to correct the errors of fashion or habit, that arise among themselves. But now, public opinion is travelling upon swift-winged packets, or steam vessels, and railroads, far beyond its former bounds. The facilities of communication between nations, are rapidly increasing. I believe the time is not far distant, when steam ships will pass from Halifax to Valencia in a week; and guests from New York may dine in London, and the contrary, on invitation of a fortnight's standing. Our railroads will soon stretch from New York to Boston—to Portland—to the Penobscot—and, ere long, to Halifax. With the facilities, the disposition to foreign travel will increase; and if the civilized world may be left at peace, its increasing prosperity and wealth will supply unexampled means. Nations will yet become acquainted with one another, and feel the force of each other's opinion; as districts of the same country have, in times past. It will be a mighty power, and it must be beneficial. It must act upon a broad scale, and will not be, like village opinion, a vexatious, and almost personal interference with private life. It must be mainly sound and wholesome; it cannot skulk into lanes and bypaths, like a penny newspaper; its rebuke will be flung abroad upon the winds of heaven; and no noble act of any government—none that can bear the light, need fear it. It must be powerful. Nothing stung Bonaparte to such vexation, as the London journals. So let it be. Let every unrighteous government fear something more immediate than the faint echoes of distant history. Let the outraged rights of humanity speak in thunders from every quarter of the heavens. Let a summoning voice come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and call every ruthless despot and oppressor before THE BAR OF THE WORLD, to answer!

LIVERPOOL, *April* 18.—At the parting point, I cannot help saying that I feel ties to England, that I did not expect. It is curious, and could not have been anticipated, but I believe that one may, all in the natural course of things, make more friendships in one year abroad, than he would in ten years at home. It seems as if a thousand distrusts and difficulties were removed, as well with one's own countrymen abroad, as with strangers. From the little I have seen and from the much that I am able to infer, I feel that society in England is clothed with many, many charms. And I know individuals in this fair and blessed isle, to make whose acquaintance and friendship is well worth a voyage across the Atlantic. God bless them! Indeed, I have gone to the length of making poetry, in my enthusiasm about England. Blessings upon it!—devout and grateful, if not poetic. Britain is to me no more a notion, but a being. With farewell tears, I shall gaze upon her receding shores, and say, and for ever say, "Peace be within her gates, and prosperity in her palaces!"

April 24.—To-day I set sail for America.

April 25.—On, on, like a mighty bird, stretching her flight across the illimitable ocean, with night and tempest brooding around her dark way. Our ship is now—leaving the last point in Europe (Ireland)—striking out into the boundless deep. To-day, I laid myself down on the sunny deck, nestling myself, as it were, upon the back of this mighty bird—and as I lay, protected from the wind under the lee of the ship's side, the situation recalled those days when I had thus laid myself down on the sunny side of a hedge, over my father's fields, amidst all the strange and mysterious dreams of boyhood. But what different situations were thus connected by the chain of association! Then I reclined amidst the rustling of leaves, the fragrance of wild flowers, and the wood notes of a thousand merry songsters; and my dreams were dreams indeed—vague, fluctuating, and half unconscious—and passed over my mind like the shadows of clouds over the surrounding landscape. Those dreams passed too within a compass as limited, perhaps, and seldom, probably, stretched themselves to the Old World. Now I return a traveller from that Old World; I repose not on the solid and quiet earth, but on a frail bark that is tossed upon "the fathomless and fitful waters;" I meditate upon a wider experience; I dream upon deeper matters than before; I dream as one, many of whose dreams have turned to cold realities: and yet, so strangely, it may be, am I constituted, that the dreams of my childhood were not fresher, than my feelings and fancies, upon a thousand subjects, are now!

"Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong!"

But ye are not stronger than the brooding meditations and wrestling thoughts, that darken and sweep, in might and mystery, through our souls!

May 1.—This morning, as my state-room chum and myself lay conversing in our berths, and the ship fetched one of those deep lurches into the trough of the sea, that makes one feel so sensibly the depths of his stomach, "There," I said, "what sort of a curve do you think the ship described then? was it parabolic or hyperbolic?"—alluding, of course, to the mathematical circles. "It was diabolic, I think," said F. Pretty good, wasn't it? But how good it was no one can tell who has not been at sea. For, truly, this sympathy with the ship is a thing indescribable. It seems as if the very fibres of your heart (or stomach, at least) were knitted to its mighty ribs. Its motions become, as it were, the motions of your whole interior being—of the very nerves, fibres, and fluids, of your entire system. Its abominable smells are the very breath of your nostrils. You become a being of tides, waves, winds, and all restless elements.

May 22.—Land! land! Were there ever four letters that expressed so much as these four? Yes, there are four letters that express more—the four that spell—HOME.

MISCELLANEOUS

DISCOURSES AND ESSAYS.

TWO DISCOURSES

ON THE

ORIGINAL USE OF THE EPISTLES.

DISCOURSE I.

1 Corinthians ix. 22: "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

That is to say, Paul adapted his religious instructions to the men whom he addressed, to their particular character, circumstances, difficulties, trials, and speculations. "Unto the Jews, he says, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, that I might gain them that are without law." From this statement, we derive the following principle of interpretation, viz. that Paul, and it may be added, that all the sacred writers, did not deliver their instructions in an abstract and general form, adapted alike and equally to all times, but that they had a local and special reference to the times in which they wrote. It was in conformity with this principle, that the apostle said to the Athenians, "The times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent;" and to the Corinthians, he gave advice adapted to a particular occasion, saying, I suppose that this is good for the present distress—*i. e.* the instruction which I give you is suited to the present exigency.

As I propose to apply this principle of interpretation to some subjects in the Epistles of the New Testament, I wish to place it distinctly before you, and in the outset, to guard it from misapprehension. It may at once be asked, if the Scriptures were not written for all men. Let us then explain, and it will be seen, I think, that the Bible could not, to any valuable purpose, have been written for *all men*, if it had not been written for *some men* in particular.

The Scriptures not only bear marks of belonging to the periods and persons that produced them, but they bear marks of perpetual adaptation to the state, the opinions, the prejudices, in one word, to the moral wants of the men to whom they were immediately addressed. When God commissioned prophets and apostles to be the instructors of the world, he did not bereave them at once of their reason, their common sense, their observation. He rather taught them more clearly to per-

ceive, and more keenly to feel, the situation, the difficulties, the fears and hopes, the sorrows, the dangers of those to whom they directed their message. He filled their hearts with peculiar solicitude and sympathy for the very persons to whom they were sent. How, then, could they fail to address themselves to the particular state and case of these persons! Indeed, all true feeling, all tender sympathy, all fervent religion is from its very nature specific and circumstantial. It does not waste itself in barren generalities. It has some specific objects, over which it meditates and is anxious—over which it ponders, and hopes, and prays.

There is a very striking character of this kind in our Scriptures, and one that distinguishes them, as far as I have observed, from all other systems of philosophy and religion. The instructions of the Bible are local, circumstantial, specific. We have not in them, a few cold and general precepts, some wise sayings, some sententious paragraphs, some mottoes of moral speculation. We hear not in them the staid and haughty philosopher, who can scarcely condescend to lay down the law to his ignorant fellow-mortals. We hear not the grave impostor, who would make up for his heartlessness and hypocrisy by an air of wisdom and pretension. The Christian teachers did not pause in stately halls or retired groves to deliver their messages, but they went down into the crowd of men, into the places of domestic abode; they penetrated into the recesses of human feeling; they communed with human frailty and human sorrow and joy: they had something for every mind. They entered into the circumstances of men, into their daily wants and trials. It is this that has communicated such a spirit and charm to their writings. They would never have found the deep springs of human thought and emotion (let the truism be pardoned), if they had not searched for them where they actually were. And they could not have searched for them, but by removing the rubbish of systems and speculations, of errors and prejudices, which was thrown over them: that is to say, but by applying themselves to the circumstances and feelings of the time.

What we say is, that the inspired teachers wrote for men; for men of the very period and nation, of the very customs and character, in the midst of which they lived. They wrote for all men, indeed, but they could not, I repeat, have done this, if they had not written for some men in particular. And to understand their writings, we must consider that they took their form and colouring from the state of things which required them.

We must add that all this is especially applicable to the Epistles of the New Testament. These, indeed, were particularly called forth by the exigences, the difficulties, the trials, of the primitive churches. Indeed, if men had received the simple doctrine of Jesus without objection or difficulty, if no contentions and controversies had sprung up, if no mistakes nor offences had arisen, these Epistles would never have been written. Some instructions the apostles might have given, and given, in the epistolary form, but their epistles would not have borne the same controversial aspect, and there would not have arisen from them in subsequent ages, the same dispute about conversion, and election, and the atonement, and Trinity. There would not in short have been the same difficulties in the interpretation of these Epistles.

They took their form from circumstances; and with these circumstances we have, and can have, but a partial acquaintance. But that they did impart an influence, that the Epistles were written for the age, there can be no doubt. You see the marks of adaptation in every sentence. There are many things in them that apply exclusively to the early Christians, that can apply to no others. Such, for instance, are the answers to questions, the solution of difficulties, the settlement of disputes, which have long since passed away. Such, too, is what relates to the use of prophetical and miraculous powers, to meats offered to idols, &c. These things do not *now* concern us; because we have no miraculous powers, and there are no idols to solicit our offerings. Will any man say, there is an idol in our hearts? Now, this is the very sort of liberty with the Scriptures, to which I feel compelled to object—this spiritualizing, this work of fanciful analogies, this attempt to make the Bible mean all that it can mean, under the notion of doing honour to it. It is both unjustifiable and injurious. The Bible addresses us as reasonable men—let us read it as reasonable men.

I should not have dwelt so long on the very obvious principle that has now been discussed, were it not a principle that is scarcely yet admitted into the prevailing theological speculations of our times, and a principle too, whose importance is quite equal to the neglect into which it has fallen. Men have endeavoured to find an application for every minute form, regulation, provision, and precept, that is contained in the Scriptures. You will find this disposition to be the basis of all the idle ceremony, and extravagant sectarism that has crept into the Church.

Indeed, it cannot fail to have been observed, that the habit of applying the language of the Epistles, without any qualification, to the subjects of Christian experience and of Christian speculation in later times, has been one of the most fruitful sources of error in every form; that it has, above all other means, fostered the confidence of sectarians; that it has gratified the pride of the weak, and the fancy of the extravagant; and that by this means, bold and ignorant men, especially—the unlearned and unstable, have wrested the Scriptures to their injury. Such men have always been found turning away from the simple instructions of Jesus, to the high mysteries of Paul, and the former have often passed for little better than flat morality, while the latter, circumstantial, local, involved in the shadows of an ancient age, and even then "difficult, and hard to be understood," have been exclusively studied as containing the high system of doctrine and essence of all spiritual religion.

There is, indeed, what must have struck every attentive mind, a very remarkable difference between the instructions of our Saviour and his apostles; but it was a difference chiefly owing to circumstances. It was a difference not in the substance, but in the form, in the style of religious instruction. Our Saviour's teaching was evidently more simple, and more entirely practical. It dealt more in easy and intelligible expositions and illustrations of truth and duty—of piety and acceptance with God. Our Saviour was announcing a system which had not yet encountered objection. It could not meet with objection till it was announced. But the apostles had to contend with a world of objectors of every description. Hence, their instructions became more speculative, more complicated, more intermixed with the insti-

tutions and ideas, and prejudices of the age, and in just that proportion, they became more argumentative and obscure; I say, that the Epistles contain nothing in the substance of religious instruction that is new. But whether they do or not—whether the novel aspect which they bear, is in any measure given by new information, it is very certain that *much* of it is the colouring of circumstances. And it is from a neglect to consider these circumstances; it is from neglect to observe the local application of these ancient writings, that such a strange and mischievous use has been made of them; that bad and erroneous notions of religion still prevail among many; and that with all, a veil of obscurity still remains in the reading of them.

But there is a danger on the other hand. There is danger of forgetting in the local application of these writings, that they have any other; of supposing that they had not only a special, but an exclusive reference to ancient times, and danger, therefore, of suffering them to fall into neglect, and of leaving out of sight that practical import, which belongs to all periods. In opposition to this impression that the Epistles had an exclusive reference to their own age, it is sufficient to observe, that it is incompatible, in the first place, with the very nature of moral writings, and in the second place with the prophetic views of the apostles, who evidently considered themselves as dispensing truths which would be interesting to all times.

It becomes very important, therefore, to consider what in the Epistles was peculiar to the times in which they were written, and what belongs to us; that we may be guarded from obscure and erroneous views of them on the one hand, and from a negligent and indifferent regard to them, on the other. Some attempt is therefore proposed to make this distinction between the special and general application of certain terms and subjects, in the Epistles; to point out the peculiar propriety and particular use of them, as adapted to the circumstances of the early Christians, and to show what is left in them, for our instruction and comfort in these later times.

1. The first subject, which I shall mention, is the institution of the Lord's Supper. Nothing can be more simple, cheerful, and inviting, than this institution was, as it originally came from the hands of its Founder, as it was first celebrated, with easy, though serious, conversation, and in the common manner of a Jewish supper, by our Lord and his disciples.

Now there is a passage on this subject, in an Epistle to the Corinthians, containing a strain of tremendous denunciation, which has spread terror through every succeeding age of the church. Many sincere and serious persons, even at this day, tremble, and hesitate, and actually refuse to obey a plain command of the Scriptures, lest they should incur the weight of that fearful curse, and should "eat and drink damnation to themselves." It has actually been supposed by multitudes that they were liable to set the seal to their everlasting perdition, by a serious and conscientious endeavour to obey the command of God. What deplorable views of God, these imaginations must have nurtured, and how much they must have interfered with the comfort and improvement of Christians, need not be said. It is more to our purpose, to remark, that the difficulty has arisen entirely from neglecting to consider the circumstances. It is true, indeed, that there has been a great misunder-

standing of the terms of this denunciation; but there has been a still greater inattention to the particular and local application of it. It was aimed against a riotous, licentious, and profane use of the Lord's Supper, in which the Corinthians had been guilty of excess, and even of intemperance. It belongs, therefore, to the Corinthian church, and to no other, until, indeed, another shall be found which is guilty of the same sacrilege.

Still there is something in this passage for our instruction and admonition. We learn from it, in opposition to what has been commonly supposed, that there is no mysterious and fatal curse, awaiting the abuse of this ordinance in particular, for Paul does not treat the Corinthians as persons who had sealed their own destruction;—he does not even so much as cut them off from the communion of the Churches, but still calls them, Brethren, sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, and affectionately exhorts them to reform this evil practice. We are admonished, on the other hand, that this feast is not to be regarded as common, but as sacred; that the ordinance is solemn, and is to be approached with reverence; and that to violate this as to violate any ordinance of Divine worship, involves heinous guilt. At the same time, I think, we may gather from this passage, that the ordinance of the Supper was not looked upon, in early times, with that *peculiar* awe and dread which prevails in many minds at this day; for it is incredible that with these views, the Corinthians, bad as they were, could ever have fallen into such gross indecorum.

2. The next subject which I shall notice, though very slightly, and chiefly for the sake of illustration, is that of intermarriages between Christians and unbelievers. Such connexions, as you know, were prohibited. Now it only needs to be considered who these unbelievers were, to convince us that such prohibition was extremely reasonable for that time, and also, quite peculiar to it. An unbeliever was a pagan; one of a different and hostile religion, a connexion with whom was likely to prove extremely inconvenient, if not hazardous. Hence the apostle says, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers." It would be about as absurd to apply this prohibition literally to our circumstances, as the prohibition under which the ancient Jews were laid, forbidding them to intermarry with the Canaanites. There *are* no unbelievers among us, in the particular sense, in which the apostle used this term. We are far from saying that there is no difference between the good and the bad; or that connexions between such are expedient; but to hold the apostolic prohibition to apply strictly to our times, and then to assume the prerogative, to decide infallibly who is a Christian, and to make this abstract inquiry a previous question in the matter; to undertake this, is incompatible, to say the least, with our knowledge, and our circumstances. And yet this is maintained to be right and necessary by great numbers of Christians of the present age. There may be, indeed, a moral maxim, gathered from the apostle's instruction on this subject, which is indeed the maxim of common sense, with regard to the importance of a similarity of habits, tastes, &c. And in this limited application, it may be asked, "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

These two instances may serve to illustrate our general principle; and we pass from them to subjects of Christian doctrine and experience.

3. I proceed therefore to remark thirdly, that the terms *faith and justification* had a propriety and a use, which has passed away with the age in which they were first adopted. I take these terms together because they are intimately connected. Men were perpetually said to be justified by faith, and this was much insisted on. Before this, we hear of justification by humility, as in the case of the publican, whose prayer is recorded; of forgiveness, which is the same as justification, through the means of forgiving others; of acceptance with God, through the means of piety, as the condition on our part: but the moment we pass into the Epistles, we find that all this comes by faith. Now, the truth is, that the condition is really not varied. It is essentially the same in both cases. It is that piety or goodness, without which it is impossible to possess, or, if possessed, to enjoy the Divine favour and approbation. And this condition is constantly represented in the Epistles to be faith, for these reasons—because a new religion was proposed whose first demand would, of course, be for faith in it; and because such faith when embraced and avowed in that age of prejudice and persecution, was an unquestionable proof of sincere and pious conviction, and hence naturally came to pass for piety itself.

Much, too, is said of justification through the free grace of God, because the apostles had to encounter the pride of philosophers, and the self-sufficiency of formalists in religion; because they found everywhere prevailing, the notion, that rites and sacrifices were entitled to procure the favour of God. Justification, therefore, not by sacrifices or by works as properly meritorious, but by grace—by the mercy of God—and justification, not by ceremonial observances, but by a living faith and obedience—these were views of religious truth that needed to be particularly urged.

Now, it is rather awkward, or, at least, it is unfortunate, that these terms should occupy the same place in *our* theology, and moral instruction, as they did in those of the apostles, because the particular occasion and propriety of them has passed away. We are a nation of believers: I do not say of true Christians, but of believers, in the popular sense of that term. There can be no such propriety in urging faith upon us, as upon an assembly of pagans, and it cannot be urged at all without many explanations; and, after all, being liable to be misunderstood. What needs to be pressed upon us, now, as a prominent point, is a different form of piety. It is not so much faith, as obedience. And as to gratuitous justification, as to free grace, the danger seems now to be, not of trusting to the mercy of God too little, but too much; and of making not too much of our own works, but of making far too little.

The attempt to apply the apostolic views of faith and justification in all their extent and frequency, to our experience, has been unfortunate, also, because it has led to unnatural, mystical ideas of religion; and among other ideas, it has led men to conjure up the preposterous notion, that the great obstacle to salvation in the human heart is not its bad passions, but some strange unwillingness to be saved by the mercy of God, and that faith, being so exclusively and all important, had some mysterious power of appropriating and securing the favour of God to itself. Indeed faith has been often thought to be nothing else but a willingness to be saved.

On the other hand, it is never to be forgotten, that we are saved by grace; and if there is yet among us any lingering thought of deserving heaven by our good deeds, we need to be reminded of the earnestness with which the apostles taught, that we are saved by grace—by the free grace, the benignity, the forgiving compassion of our Maker. And if any of us are thinking that our claim to the Divine favour, though not perfect, is yet quite promising;—that we have done so little evil, and have led a life so moral and unimpeachable, that it would be unjust in God to punish us for our sin, we may rest assured that we know little of ourselves, and less still of that humility, contrition, and deep sense of unworthiness, that belong to the real Christian.

4. The remarks which have been made, might be applied to several topics in the Epistles, but we are limited for the present, to one further: I mean the subject of *religious experience*. Religious experience, in the early age, was itself strongly coloured by circumstances, and the description of it still more.

It is to be considered, in the first place, that the circumstances of that age gave to religion a character of powerful excitement. We are to remember that it was the age of miracles, of signs and wonders; that it was the era of a new and wonderful revelation; that it was the epoch of a new religious dominion; and that men's minds were strongly excited, by what was novel, marvellous, or prospective around them. We are to remember, that the new religion aroused them from a guilty and degraded idolatry, and naturally filled them with amazement and alarm.

Again, it is to be considered, that the circumstances of that age made religion, if I may speak so, a more notable thing—a thing more easily marked by dates, more easily referred to a certain period of time. Conversion in that day consisted of two parts. It was a turning from Paganism to Christianity; and it was a turning from sin to holiness. Conversion, therefore, was both an event and an experience; not an experience only, as it now is, but an event—a thing that could be dated from a certain day and hour. We are to remember, then, that conversion was not a change of affections, only, but of the whole religion; a change of rites, of customs, of the whole course of life—that it was a change of hopes, too—that it introduced men into a new world, a world of new, and bright, and astonishing revelations; that it was for this reason, that a new phraseology become applicable to them, not to their character entirely, but in part to their circumstances; that they became, at once, externally, rather than internally, new creatures; that old things passed away, and all things became new; that they were brought out of darkness into marvellous light. We see in all this, I say, the colouring of circumstances. These men were not at once made perfect, and fit for heaven, as the language would seem to represent; for they were urged to make their calling and election sure. The language describes an inward change indeed; but it also describes a ceremonial change. If the change had been *altogether* spiritual, we doubtless should have had a simpler and more accurate phraseology on the subject. We know, indeed, that an instantaneous and total change of all the habits, thoughts, feelings, and purposes of the soul, is incompatible with the nature of the mind, and with all proper moral influence upon it.

It can require but little reflection to convince you of all this. You must have observed, also, what injury the literal application of this language to religious experience in later days, has produced, by awakening noisy excitement, and abundant joys, and rash confidence, and, on the whole, an artificial, and extravagant experience, at a moment when simplicity, and modesty, and anxiety, and watchfulness, were of all things the most suitable and desirable. And you must have reflected, how much better and fitter it would have been, in that moment of imaginary or real conversion, for the subject of it, instead of coming forth to the multitude to tell what the Lord had done for his soul—how much better, if he had gone away to his retired closet to pray, and to carry on the secret struggle of the religious life in his own bosom; how much better for him who thinks himself to have been a Christian but for one hour, or for one day, in that day, in that hour, to be silent, thoughtful, diffident, anxious!

But there is danger, and great danger, on the other hand. Perceiving that the apostolic language had a special application to former times, we may imagine, that it has little or no relation to us. The colouring of circumstance, which is spread over their phraseology, may hide from us its deep and serious meaning. We may imagine, that the doctrine of conversion is but an antiquated notion, with which we have little or no concern. We may look upon it as the costume of religious experience, in an ancient age, which is now quite laid aside. Yet how strange would it be to suppose a costume, which clothed nothing, or a body — of phraseology, if I may speak so — without a living spirit! And how low must be our conceptions of Jesus and his apostles — of the most spiritual teachers the world ever saw, if we imagine their ultimate object to have been, to bring about a formal change of religion, a mere change of rites and names!—Their doctrine, may it never be forgotten! pointed chiefly to the heart; and we all have a concern with it more weighty and solemn, than any circumstances can impose. If, my friends, if we are Christians only in name — if we hope for heaven only because we were born in a Christian land, we still need a conversion. If we are worldly; if we are covetous or sensual; if we are guided by inclination rather than by duty, we need a conversion, not less than that which the Pagan experienced. If we are unkind, severe, censorious, or injurious, in the relations or the intercourse of life; if we are unfaithful parents, or undutiful children; if we are severe masters, or faithless servants; if we are treacherous friends, or bad neighbours, or bitter competitors, we need a conversion; we need a change, greater than merely from Paganism to Christianity. If, in fine, we have never yet formed the resolute and serious purpose of leading a religious life; if we do not love the duties of piety; if we have not yet learnt the fear of God, nor cherished the spirit of prayer, we need a conversion. We need to be anxious: we need to fear. We need to strive to enter in at the strait gate.

Religion is as full of absorbing interest, now, as it ever was. And if we ever enter this way of life, though our access to it will hardly be joyful and triumphant, if we are wise; yet there will be — let us not take the part of the cold-hearted scoffer! there will be joys — abundant joys in its progress: and there will be triumph, glorious triumph in its close. But first, there will be, as of old, many an anxious struggle,

many a serious meditation, many an earnest prayer: there will be, there must be watchings and fears, there must be striving, and hope; and then will come the triumph. Yes, weary Christian! there will be triumph — glorious triumph — when you can say, with the fervent apostle, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me at that day."

DISCOURSE II

1 Corinthians ix. 22: "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

The use which has been made of this passage will be recollected. It manifestly supports the principle that Paul's instructions were modified by the circumstances in which they were given. We are, therefore, led to conclude that there was something in the manner and form of the apostolic instructions, peculiar to the early age; while, at the same time, there is a spirit in them that belongs to all ages.

5. We have attempted, in some particulars, to make this distinction between the local and the general application of them; and proceed directly to notice, as a fifth instance of this distinction, *the manner in which our Saviour is spoken of* in the New Testament. Now there are two circumstances which affected this manner.

The first, indeed, was not entirely peculiar to that age, but it deserves to be mentioned as stamping a peculiarity upon the language of the apostles concerning Jesus Christ. It was common to call a system in religion or philosophy familiarly by the name of its founder; so that the name of the founder became a kind of appellative for the system. Thus Plato was the familiar name for the doctrine or philosophy of Plato. Thus Christians were said to be constantly in Christ—to be members of Christ—to be baptized into him—to put on the Lord Jesus Christ; meaning, of course, in all these instances, the principles and doctrines of his religion. Now this was the custom of the age, the style of writing and speaking; it was form, it was phraseology; and we are perfectly at liberty to lay it aside, when it is no longer consonant with our general habits of speaking; and when we look less with admiration upon Jesus Christ, as the founder of a new system, than with veneration, as the Saviour of men.—And yet this sort of phraseology is, with some, the test of evangelical preaching; and though you speak never so clearly and fervently of the great principles of Christianity, it will be said, and perhaps contemptuously said, that "there is nothing of Christ in it."

But there is another circumstance to be mentioned. It is this: that the apostles spoke of Jesus as eye-witnesses; as those who had seen him in his teachings, in his sufferings; who had been with him and lived with him; and who would naturally speak of him with the warmth of a personal interest and friendship. These remarks apply to Paul, also, for there was, doubtless, a mutual sympathy among the early disciples,

in these feelings; these were a spirit of the age. Perhaps it is in imitation of this, without the same circumstances to justify it, that there is sometimes witnessed, an irreverent and almost shocking familiarity with the name of Jesus: and a neglect to consider the circumstances, together with doctrinal errors, has led others, perhaps, to speak of Jesus Christ with an affection, trust, and delight, far beyond what they ever ascribe to God the Father. So that a writer justly remarks, that a discourse on the goodness of God, shall pass for something very flat, cold, and common-place, while a discourse on the compassion of Christ to sinners, shall be looked upon as containing the very marrow and essence of the Gospel.

There certainly have been in the world, and are, very singular and superstitious feelings concerning Jesus Christ;—there is a peculiarity in men's regard towards him, of which I do not remember to have seen any explanation attempted. Nothing has been so sacred in religion as the name of Christ; nothing deemed so awful as to profane it—not even to profane the name of God himself. Nothing has so tasked, and awed, and overwhelmed the minds of men, as inquiries into his nature and offices. Of the dread attributes of God, of the momentous concerns of human duty, they could freely reason and speculate. Concerning these subjects, it has not been thought rash to inquire. Nay, it has been judged lawful and wise, not only to examine our early impressions, but to modify, to change, to improve them. Indeed, everything else in religion is open to our scrutiny. But the moment any one undertakes to scrutinize the character and offices of our Saviour, he is assailed with voices of warning. If he dares to doubt, he is given up for lost. It would seem as if there was some peculiar and superstitious fear of doing wrong or offence to Christ, a scrupulous care on this point, a punctiliousness of devotion to him—such as the idolater pays to the duty he most fears, or to the symbol he most reverences. Or, on the other hand, the same general state of mind takes the form of a fond and sentimental attachment, expressed by the most odious and offensive freedom of speech. And many really imagine, that while with a kind of sympathetic fervour, they are embracing the Being of their impassioned imagination, and are calling him "dear Saviour," and "precious Christ," and "lovely Jesus," they are entering into the very heart and life of religion.

Without undertaking fully to account for this extravagant state of mind, which would lead us too far from our object, we may remark in passing, that it has probably, in part, grown out of a mistaken and improper attempt to adopt entirely the language and feeling of the early disciples. The imitation has, indeed, as usual, gone far beyond the original. For never did the apostles inculcate any such superstitious emotion of fear, or give licence to any such sickening fondness of language concerning Christ, as has been witnessed in later days.

Far different from this, far more rational, far more reverential, far more profound and earnest, too, is the gratitude and admiration which we are bound to entertain for the greatest moral Benefactor of men. The ages that have intervened between us and his actual residence on earth, have only accumulated evidences and illustrations of the value and grandeur of his work. Be it so, that his teaching, his doctrine, his system of religion is often figuratively called by his name; yet it is

none the less true that he is a real person. And however much cause his immediate disciples had to revere and love him, we have none the less. And although our attachment to him must be less personal than theirs, although it must partake less of the character of an intimate friendship, yet it may be, if possible, even more reverential, more intellectual, more expanded. I know not what enthusiasm for excellence is — I know not what veneration for goodness, and gratitude for kindness are, if these sentiments do not peculiarly belong to the Author and Finisher of our blessed faith. Let me hear no more of admiration, of love, and joy, if he who has taught me peace of mind, and true wisdom, who has brought me nigh to God, and opened for me the path to immortality — if *he* shall not be admired and loved, and hailed with raptures of joy. This is no fanatical nor superstitious emotion, but it is the natural, the true and sober homage of human feeling to transcendant worth, and loveliness of character, and to unspeakable goodness — goodness, not common and earthly, but spiritual, disinterested, divine; witnessed by toils and sufferings, and sealed in death.

What though the time of our Saviour's visible manifestation has passed away — what though the footsteps of the Benefactor and the Sufferer no longer tread the earth, and his voice no longer speaks to the weary and heavy-laden—what though the tears of Gethsemane no longer call for mortal sympathies, and the dark scene of Calvary has passed away from the awful mount, and all the wonderful memorial of what he was is no longer told by living and admiring witnesses, yet all this was but the preparation for his reign, but the passage to his throne in the lasting admiration and affection of men. If it is much to us that he once lived among men, is it not more that he now liveth at the right hand of God? If it interests us to go back to the scene of his teaching and suffering, and his dying hour, does it not still more interest us, that we may hereafter behold the same teacher, the same sufferer—him who was dead and is alive again, and liveth for evermore? Do we not feel, that in the coming world we have a forerunner, and that we are going to the dwelling-place of a friend—to mansions that he hath gone to prepare for us? Is there anything extravagant or enthusiastic in the expectation, that we shall know *him*, whom we call our Saviour, in some new manner and degree, that we shall learn more and more of the loveliness of his character, and shall hold with him a sacred communion, a sublime friendship, for ever? I think not: if the probabilities which reason offers, if the revelations which the Scriptures unfold, may be listened to. In all this, I persuade myself, that I entertain no superstitious ideas of our Saviour. I regard him, as I would regard any other benefactor; only that he is the most exalted of all. For all the blessings of this life, are to me inconsiderable compared with what he has taught in his doctrine, with what he has procured by his death, and consummated in his rising from the tomb.

VI. I shall now introduce as a sixth and final topic of illustration, the manner in which *the relation of Christians to one another and to the world*, is spoken of.

And in the first place, the relation of Christians to one another. The ancient fellowship of Christians was something considerably different from what the present institutions and modes of society permit. They were a persecuted and proscribed class of men. Almost the whole world

was united against them. Danger and death waited for them everywhere. These circumstances produced a peculiar union and familiarity among them. Their exposure was common, and they were endeared to one another: it was imminent, and they forgot, in a measure, the ordinary distinctions of social life. It was no time to stand upon etiquette and form. The weakest member of their society rose into importance, when he might preserve the life of the most powerful, or be called on to give up his own life for the common cause. Hence the apostles exhort them, with peculiar emphasis, to mutual confidence, intercourse, counsel, and aid, and even to mutual advice and exhortation.

It does not follow that it is now expedient to break down all the barriers of distinction in society. It does not follow that it is now the duty of all Christians to mingle together in the intimate intercourse of life. The proper *order* of life, the different modes of living, different tastes and habits, different degrees of knowledge and refinement, forbid it.

Let Christians learn to love one another: this is all that they can now do; and this is enough. Let those who come to the same sanctuary, who worship at the same altar, feel that respect and kindness for each other, which their common relation and common approach to the same God, should inspire. We wish indeed that more of the *spirit* of the ancient fellowship was among us, that there was more tenderness for each other's faults, more zeal and solicitude for each other's spiritual improvement and comfort, more mutual intercession at the common throne of grace. It is lamentable, indeed, that the outward forms of society so much divide us, while the inward spirit so little unites us. We need to be often reminded that the external distinctions of life are vain and perishing, and that another order of greatness and honour will be obtained in the world to which we are going. Let us oftener carry ourselves forward beyond this state of imperfect allotments, let us pass beyond these bounds of our earthly vision, and remember that he whom we scarcely know or notice here, may be greater and more beloved than we in that more exalted state—may be the greatest in the kingdom of God. Let us, then, free our minds from those low and worldly ways of thinking which too much prevail, concerning poverty, and toil, and the humble lot. It may be the best and the safest of all conditions. It may be only the greater trial for the greater reward. It may be, as we often see it in this life, the retirement and obscurity that is to open to the most splendid distinction and glory—a temporary darkness that is to give place to the brightest day.

Again; it is to be remarked, that the description of those who were called from the world into the Christian church is not, in all respects, applicable to the present time. We are told, that "not many noble, not many mighty, not many wise, were called;" but that the poor of this world were made rich in faith, and the ignorant were made wise unto salvation. If you look at the state of things in that day, you will see a special reason for all this. The profession of Christianity was disgraceful. To take the name of Christian was to take the name of infamy. The chief apostle tells us, that he and his companions were accounted the offscouring of the world. Now the persons who would be most susceptible of the fear of disgrace, were the great, the noble—men who were in high and conspicuous stations, who had a character at stake, and who lived in a state of society, too, where honour was ever

more regarded than it is now. Not so the poor, the ignorant, the unknown, who were already degraded and trampled on by their superiors, and who had no honour to lose.

Besides, those who bore rule often considered themselves as pledged by their office, to persecute Christianity. They regarded it as the rival of their religion, and the enemy of their power. How, then, could many such be expected to embrace it?

And with regard to the wise of that day, let it be considered what sort of wise persons they were: wise in sophistry, wise in subtilties of Grecian speculation, and the jargon of the Oriental philosophy, wise in their own conceit, and looked down with ineffable contempt on the vulgar. Would these men condescend to be taught by a few fishermen from Galilee? Would they hear of a teacher from the despised land of Judea.

But things are now changed. The intelligent among us are not like the sages of those days. Learning is more allied to common sense, and has taken the garb of modesty. The powerful and great among us have not the same reasons for rejecting Christianity. The profession of it is respectable. It is the religion of the land. And we can point to many great, and mighty, and wise, who profess and adorn it. And on the whole, in a general and fair estimate, there is properly more virtue, more regard to the Christian religion, among the higher than among the lower classes of our communities.

It is altogether unwarrantable, therefore, to apply the ancient comparison, to the present state of things. Yet there are not wanting instances of such a comparison. If—to cite one of them—if one form of Christianity attracts the more intelligent, opulent, and respectable classes of society; if there is a progress, an improvement in the views of religion, which generally, we do not say universally, draws the respect and attention of more improved minds; and if the opposer of these views is annoyed by the reflection, and mortified by the comparison—"Ah! my brethren," he says, "ye know how it is written, that not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but the foolish things, and the weak things, and the base things, and things that are despised, hath God chosen." Now I shall seriously and boldly say, that he *ought* to know *better* than to make such an application of Scripture. By this rule of judging, he might level and degrade all that is dignified and respectable in society!

The higher and the more prosperous classes of the community undoubtedly have their dangers and faults. These we shall be led to notice, however, under the remaining topic of this general head—viz. the relation of the Christian Church to the world.

Here, too, it may be easily shown, I think, that the language of the Epistles needs to be qualified in its application to us; the language, I say, which describes the relation of the Christian Church to the world. It was said of Christians, that they had not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; and they were commanded not to be conformed to the world. They were directed to come out from the surrounding world, and to be separate, and not to touch the unclean thing. Now, this language is understood by many as literally applicable to our present circumstances, though our circumstances are immensely different from those of the early Christians. And it may well be feared, that the

habit of applying the apostolic representation of the heathen world, to the world around us, and of making the same distinction between the Church and the world, that then existed, has awakened in some Christians an unamiable pride and vanity, has helped to give them a stiffness and repulsiveness of manners towards others, and has made them less friendly, kind, and social, in their intercourse with men, generally, than they otherwise would have been. He who takes up the notion, that the whole community around him, with the exception of the few who belong to the Church — that all others are at heart enemies to him on account of his religion, and deserve the characteristics and the appellations that the apostles anciently gave to the pagan world, and that to himself also belong, on account of his moral superiority, all those distinctive titles of dignity and excellence, which were applied in part to the circumstances of the early Christians; he who holds these views, I say, cannot fail to have his amiableness and modesty affected by them. He may think that all men are his enemies, and he may treat them as if they were so, and when they testify, as they well may, their displeasure or their ridicule, at his forbidding and sanctimonious deportment, he may think himself persecuted for righteousness' sake, but he is greatly mistaken!

The truth is, there *is* no such distinction between the Church and the world, as there was in the early age. There is no such distinction of character, as the language in question describes: and it never was designed solely to describe a distinction of character, but in part a difference of circumstances, a difference of religion, of privileges, of knowledge, of moral advantages. Recollect that the worst Churches, that the Corinthian Church, amidst all its shameful disputes, its more shameful vices, and its awful profanation of the Lord's supper, still enjoyed all these high and distinctive titles of superiority; and you must conclude that these distinctions were in part ascribed to their outward state. Recollect that the Jews, in the worst period of their history, were still called a chosen people, a holy nation, and you will have an exemplification of the same thing.

The world, in the times of the apostles, was a Pagan world, and was emphatically hostile to the Christian Church. The two were widely and visibly distinguished. It is true, indeed, that there is, and ever was, a wide distinction between good and bad men. And it will be admitted by us all, I presume, that there is at this day more of a serious purpose and endeavour to lead a pious life, more reading and studying of the Scriptures, more prayer, and persevering virtue, within the Church, than without it. And much were it to be wished that it *were*, indeed, more distinguished from the spirit of the world, than any language can describe. But as the case really and unfortunately is — to draw a line of distinction, and to say, that on the one side is all the goodness and piety in the world, and on the other none at all—this is more than modesty would claim on one part, and more than justice ought to admit on the other. And, yet, all the outcry there is, about confounding the Church and the world, is supported by the notion of such a distinction— is supported by the particular, and local, and circumstantial representations that belong to the apostolic age.

But still we must contend that there is a world to be feared; or, to speak more accurately, there is a spirit of the world which is to be feared; and the more so, just in proportion as it is less suspected. We

are not required to withdraw from the general intercourse of society, as the early Christians were; we have to do what is far harder—to live *in* the world, and yet to withstand the spirit of the world. When the Christian band was small, and persecuted, and hemmed in, by a surrounding and hostile community, it was not so difficult to preserve its unity and good fellowship, and consistency of character. Then, there was a visible and formal separation. On one side, there was open hostility; on the other, unqualified jealousy and dread.

Now what we have to fear in the world, is no longer visible. It is a foe in ambush. It is the spirit of the world. It is an influence, secret, subtle, insinuating, which leads us captive before we are aware, and which leads us, not to martyrdom, but to compliance. Alas! (we had almost said) it does not bear our souls on the mounting flame to heaven, but it chains and fastens them down to the earth. There is such a spirit, though we may see it not, that is more to be dreaded than the arm of persecution. There is a spirit of business, absorbing, eager, over-reaching—ungenerous and hard in its dealings, keen and bitter in its competitions, low and earthly in its purposes;—there *is* a spirit of fashion, vain, trifling, thoughtless, fond of display, dissipating the mind, wasting the time, and giving its chief stimulus and its main direction to the life;—there is a spirit of ambition, selfish, mercenary, restless, circumventing, living but in the opinion of others, envious of others' good fortune, or miserably vain of its own success;—there *is* a spirit in the world of business, in the world of amusement, in the world of ambition, which is to be dreaded. Even in our best employments there is something to fear. There is a spirit of reading, merely for gratification; or of writing, for credit; of going to church for entertainment; of praying with formality; and of preaching—shall I say it?—of preaching with selfish aims, which is to be dreaded, and, in the latter case, to be abhorred. Ah! my friends, it is a dangerous world that we live in. The best, the wisest, the purest, have found it to be so. To fall into the wide-sweeping current of its influence, and to be borne along with it, may be easy, may be pleasant, but *it is not safe*. There is, if I may specify once more—there is a spirit, which is of the world, a spirit whose low habits belong to this world, rather than to any expectation of a better—whose fears, and hopes, and anxieties, are all limited to these earthly scenes, which is grasping for an earthly treasure and forgets the heavenly:—there is a mind, that is fascinated and engrossed by things seen and temporal, and indifferent to things unseen and eternal; there is a prevailing forgetfulness of God, there is an insensibility to the worth of the soul, to its necessities and dangers, to the need of prayer and effort, to guard it in temptations, and to guide it in its solemn probation for the future;—in one word, there is a pervading spirit of religious indifference, which is to be dreaded.

In the external habits and actions of life, as has been already said, we cannot be greatly distinguished; but there is a harder distinction to attain; it is in the internal habits of the mind. In this respect it is, that we are still commanded to come out and be separate. In this respect it is not safe for us to live as the world lives. Nor is it safe for us to live carelessly in the world. Not only is the moral atmosphere around us infected, but we breathe it, we live in it, and it presses us on every side. In these circumstances, every solemn admonition of the

Scripture relating to the world, nay, in the spirit of it, may be properly applied to us at this day. In these circumstances, we need, as men ever have needed, and ever will need, a faith that overcomes the world.

On the whole, let us remember, that although the circumstances of the early revelation have passed away, the religion itself, has, if I may speak so, an everlasting freshness and novelty. There was something in the instructions of the apostles that was appropriate to their age; but all that is essential and spiritual remain for us. There is a broad basis of moral truth; there is an everlasting foundation, on which the men of all ages may stand. Though the form of its superstructure shows the architecture of the age—though some of its former appendages on which Christians gazed with admiration, are fallen off, though the burnished dome no longer kindles in the first splendours of the morning, yet the mighty temple of its worship is still open for us to enter, and to offer the sublime homage of our devotion.

In fine, though the form and the costume, and the aspects of circumstance have fallen off, with the signs and wonders of the early age, religion is but presented to us in a more sublime and spiritual character. And our progress in this religion will be marked by a closer adherence, and a more exclusive regard to the spirit and essence of it, and a less concern about particular modes of phraseology, and the particular forms of its exhibition. We shall pass through the intervening veils, which different dispensations, and different ages, which systematic speculations and sectarian prejudices have thrown around it, and shall approach the great reality. We shall pass through the rent veil of the temple, and enter the holy of holies. We shall thus make our progress in knowledge and devotion, a suitable preparation for a state of being more spiritual and sublime; where infirmity shall no longer need forms to support it; nor inquiry guards to preserve it—where different systems and dispensations shall no more mislead, nor prejudice, nor divide us; but there shall be one eternal conviction—that of the truth: and one eternal dispensation—the dispensation of the spirit.

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT THE

DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH,

IN BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

PSALM xciii. 5: "Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever."

"HOLINESS!" No place, however sacred — no occasion, however interesting, can be so great as the principle which consecrates it. Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

When I think of this spiritual consecration, all outward adornments, decent rights, visible prosperity — the thronged gates and the gathering of a multitude, sink to nothing before me, and I feel that the great and sacred intent for which we have built this structure, could make any place sacred and sublime. Nay, my brethren, I can well conceive of circumstances in which loneliness, and desertion, and danger, would ennoble and endear to us a scene like this. If this, instead of being a temple of prosperous worship, were the altar of a forlorn hope; if we were met here to-day, to pledge a lofty and solemn fidelity to a rejected and scorned faith; if this were the cave or the catacomb to which the early Christians stole in silence and darkness; greater and dearer might it be to us, than this fair sanctuary. Better than cushioned seats and painted walls, might be the ragged stone or the cold sarcophagus on which they leaned; and sweeter than chant or anthem, the stern and deep-toned voice of their great resolve.

I speak thus, my brethren, not to praise goodly temples the less, but to praise sanctity and solemn intent the more. Meet it is, that the temples of a nation's worship should be goodly and fair. I cannot think that this is the only point at which liberality is to pause, and expense to be carefully restricted. Every large city in the country is each year lavishing upon luxuries, entertainments, spectacles — upon things that *perish* with the passing year — enough to build ten noble churches; and every town and village is doing the same thing in its proportion. Now surely, if there is anything for which a people should be willing even to strain their resources somewhat, it is to do that well which is to be done but once in the course of some hundred years; to bestow some unusual care and expense on that which is to be associated with religious ideas, and in that important relation to be viewed, with pleasure or disgust, by the eyes of passing generations.

Architecture is a language, as truly as sculpture and painting — nay, as truly as literature, as poetry. The front of a majestic and beautiful

church is known and read of all men. The stranger, the gazer, the passer-by, though he read nothing else, reads that. And there are religious edifices in the world, whose effect in elevating the mind, cannot be transcended by any painting or statue, by any poem or eloquent discourse. And suppose that such poem or discourse could be so depicted as to be set up in an enduring form, and to make an instant and inevitable impression, by the very way-side where multitudes and generations are walking. Would it not be a goodly work to place it there? Would not the very idea, the bare possibility of it awaken the utmost enthusiasm? But a magnificent piece of architecture *is* such a poem—*is* such a discourse. Insomuch that I will venture to say, and I say it advisedly and deliberately, that I should value as much, in any city or town, the effect of the York Minster in England, as of that great work of England's sublimest bard, the "Paradise Lost." He who gazes upon such a structure, is melted, enraptured, overwhelmed, with delight and veneration; he feels as he does when he gazes upon the sublime objects of nature. And to place a majestic cathedral in one of our cities—would that it might yet be done here!—would be, as if you could place the loftiest mountain of the Alps in its neighbourhood, to bear up the thoughts of its inhabitants to sublimity, to beauty, to heaven!

A church, too, is more than a work of art; it is a symbol. It is a symbol of religion; a visible sign and setting forth of the religious sentiment. Churches are the outward consecration of our cities, of our villages, of our country, of the world. They are visible tokens of the invisible; they lead the thoughts to the unseen and infinite. Their rising towers, their pointed spires, recognise a communication between earth and heaven. They are like the ladder which Jacob saw in vision, on which the angels of God were ascending and descending; and he who pauses beneath them in the sacred hours, to meditate and pray, is sometimes led to exclaim, with the ancient patriarch, "how dreadful is this place! this is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven!" What would a city or a village be, in appearance, even to the passing traveller, without churches!—a city of habitations and warehouses, and houses of entertainment for the wayfaring man, and houses of pleasure for the gay; but without one structure to recognise the sense of devotion and of duty? Would not the very traveller hasten, for his life, from such a city as the city of destruction? And what a striking testimony is it, to the universal sense of some kind of religion, that one such city was never found in the world!

Man is ever struggling upward to something above and beyond him. I do not say that he is always making the right moral effort; but that his thought, his mind, his feeling, never satisfied with the earth, soars, instinctively soars, away from it—even though he scarcely knows whither. But, my brethren, do not we know where our thoughts soar? Have we not a purpose in this erection? Do we not feel that we have need of such a place of resort? We know that the lights of heaven are often obscured by earthly mists, and we build here a tower of observation, where we may come up and gaze upon their unclouded brightness. We know that the waves of our earthly fortunes and experiences roll in wild and fearful commotion around us; and we build here a Pharos, a light-house, to guide us upon the dark and stormy sea. And long as

that lofty tower stands, may it bear the blessed light of guidance and hope to us and our children!

We have departed from the custom of our churches, by giving this structure a name. We denominate it, the Church of the Messiah. We did not wish that it should bear down to future times a sectarian title, or that its name should change with successive pastors. We are sensible that it will often be called by these names, and we pretend not to force a name upon any one; though the congregation have unanimously adopted the one now designated. But we hope that in process of time it will come to bear this title in familiar usage. We hope that this name—one permanent name—a name most sacred—will become venerable and hoary, through the associations of coming years and the attachment of succeeding generations. At the same time, we do not lay aside our denomination as a religious society. We are "The Second Congregational Unitarian Society," worshipping in the Church of the Messiah.

II. I have thus spoken in general of the consecration of this place to the great sentiment of religion. But this naturally leads us to something more specific; in other words, to the distinct views and uses which have been contemplated in the erection of this building.

Let me then say, that our main desire and purpose is, to consecrate this place of worship, not to any extraordinary novelties; not to any strange and singular opinions; not to any controversial dogmas; not to any vain presumption that we alone, on all points, are right, and that others, on all points, are wrong. We would consecrate this Church, not to pride of opinion, but to modesty and humility; not to assurance, but to inquiry: not to any unbecoming claim of infallibility, but to the great principle of religious progress. We stand here on a humble spot, upon a vast globe, which is yet itself but a humble spot amidst the infinitude of worlds and systems—and here, in the morning twilight of our being, we build an altar to lowly seeking and earnest prayer for light; we build an altar not only to the truth which we do know, but the truth which we hope to know. Yet none the less do we build it, to the truth which we do know. To the old, the primal, the time-hallowed truths of all religion; to the elder faith of Christians,—sanctified by their prayers and sealed with their blood; to the common, so far as it is the most heartfelt faith of all Christians now, do we dedicate this temple. To the unity of the faith in the bond of peace, do we dedicate it; to one God, the Father; to one Saviour, Jesus Christ; to one Divine Spirit, sent to enlighten, sanctify, and save us; to the faith of a divine revelation, and of an universal and kind providence; to the boundless grace of God in the Gospel, to the instruction of mankind in righteousness, to their redemption from sin, and to the hope of everlasting life. Above all, and emphatically, do we dedicate this church to the cross of Christ. We call it after the name of the great Messiah. We dedicate it to his cross. That symbol, if the act would not be misunderstood, would I gladly see raised high above the tower of this consecrated building. It is the distinctive symbol of our salvation. In that cross, to my eyes, shine most brightly, the mercy of God and the hope of man. In saying this, I intend to say nothing blindly or mysteriously. Out of mystery into reality, would I bring that great sacrifice; out of a vague and ineffectual reliance, into a distinct and

living sympathy; out of theory, into practice; out of study into the heart. I utter no professional *dictum*, when I say that I hold the heartfelt knowledge of what that cross meaneth, to be the dearest knowledge on earth. Truly and deeply, and in a sense not yet enough understood, it is saving knowledge. The Catholic worships that cross. I too would have it worshipped; but it should not be the worshipping of a mere symbol, nor of the mere agony that it sets forth. It should be the "worship of sorrow," endeared by its patience; it should be the worship of divine meekness, of victorious humiliation, of all-conquering forgiveness, of all-consummating self-sacrifice. It is a worship, which, if I could put it into the heart of any worldly and self-indulgent being, would make him a new and a happy creature. Before that cross, were it rightly revered and worshipped, all worldly pride and vain glory would sink to the dust; all Christian virtues would spring up—amidst tears, amidst penitence, amidst self-renunciation, they should spring up—fair and beautiful like the life and the love of Jesus. By this sign should men conquer—not as Constantine conquered; the world's very ambition should then be conquered, won, redeemed to the service of God; and the paths—the till now weary and darkened paths of earth—should be bright and happy, I had almost said, as the regions of heaven!

You will not suppose, I trust, that I wish you to infer from what I have now said, that the liberty of explaining Christianity, which every body of believers claim for themselves, is to be denied to us. We have our explanation; and not denying that others have it in part, yet of such price do I hold it, that it involves, in my estimation, almost the entire value of Christianity itself. But there is not space here, and now is not the time, when I wish to go into minute explanations. We look upon these walls, in which we trust that the worship of centuries is to be celebrated—of centuries, in whose growing light we believe that many a glaring and fiery dispute of present times will fade away—and our thoughts are not of controversy. We are thinking rather of that uncontroverted and venerable Christianity, which, through this durable monument, we wish to bequeath to them that shall come after us. We rejoice that not by the breath of words only, which die in the utterance, but through these massive walls, our mind, our purpose, our desire, shall stand declared. I lay my hand upon this pulpit—this altar-place of our prayer—and from that dim future of some distant century, comes one, now unborn and unknown, and lays his hand upon it; and we speak to him and to the brethren yet to stand here with him. We tell them of our care, while in life, for the precious cause of religion and virtue; we tell them that we thought of our children and of our children's children; we commit to them, in sacred trust, that blessed religion in which alone the generations of mankind can be blessed and conducted to heaven; we invoke upon them, through the flight of years, the mercy of that God who "showeth mercy to thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments."

III. But beyond the views which I have presented to you, of the general consecration of this church, and of the doctrinal principles and prospects to which it is devoted, there is another point, which I could not satisfy myself on this occasion, without bringing more distinctly before you.

This church is especially dedicated to *practical* religion—to a religion that has the most intimate connexion with our daily life and welfare.

The relation of the pulpit to the surrounding world—that which consecrates it to human welfare—is a topic not only appropriate to the present occasion, but one which deserves on all occasions, as I humbly conceive, to be more deeply considered than it has been. With this, then, let me occupy the few remaining moments of our present meditation.

And here let me observe, that in what I may attempt to say of the relation of the pulpit to human welfare, I shall assume for the basis of my remarks no particular creed. It appears to me, that whatever my creed might be, I should still pursue the same general course in my preaching; and I have no doubt that every creed exhibits, more or less, an example of the kind of ministration which I shall advocate.

We must all admit that the pulpit is designed to promote human well-being. If this be not the design, no construction nor instrument on earth was ever so completely without a purpose. The very plough in the furrow were more sacred, than the pulpit which never cultivates the field of the world.

But what is human welfare? And where is it? And how is it to be promoted? These are the questions that ascertain the true province, the true sanctity of the pulpit.

What is human welfare? It is the intrinsic character of a man. It is the inward principle that governs him continually. It is piety towards God, and fidelity towards men. It is purity in the heart, and virtue in the life. It is penitence, submission, faith. It is temperance, moderation, calmness, cheerfulness. It is love, gentleness, goodness of heart. It is to be freed from the distractions of passion, from the pains of a violated conscience, and from the agony of hopeless despair. It is, in one word, an accordance, sincere and heartfelt, with the Gospel of Christ. This only is true welfare. I know that there is a controversy ever going on in the human heart on this question. But this is what the pulpit teaches. And when it teaches this, it takes its stand on the ground of eternal truth and everlasting experience. The ingenuity of the human heart may be for ever employed in gainsaying this position —but it will for ever be employed in vain.

But where is this welfare to be found? Is it not wherever a man is? —in the house, and by the way—at home and abroad—in the warehouse and on the mart—in the street where he walks, and in the society to which he resorts—in labour and recreation—amidst wealth and poverty, in all conditions which God has ordained for his discipline and improvement? In all these, he is seeking some satisfying good; and amidst them he must find it, or nowhere. That is to say, he must find it where he is continually. I must beg you to pardon the truism; for really many are thinking that they are to obtain the chief good, only in places where they are seldom found. I say, therefore, that a man is to find his essential, his spiritual welfare there, where he habitually is— not in the church nor in the closet only, but amidst the very care, business, strife, and turmoil of life. Yes, he must find the true relief in that care, the true integrity in that business, the true self-government in that strife, and the true calmness in that turmoil.

Now to this end, and to this emphatically, all pulpits and all churches are, or should be, consecrated—consecrated as instruments to that end. And let me tell you, that there is not one erection in this city that more

nearly concerns the actual and varied life that men are every day living; no, not your courts of justice nor your schools—no, not your houses nor your warehouses. For in all these you are seeking that which is beyond them all—that which they all cannot give—that to which they are all instrumental—happiness. And here, in this consecrated place, is taught the only principle that can compass that great and ultimate aim. Whether we have yet learned this truth, I do not say; but this, I say, we must learn. This truth, I see, every day, around me, and never anywhere more than in this very city. Let the whole great world become your minister—let it bring tribute to you, from every clime and from every mine, and from every wave of the sea, and from every treasure-house of luxury and abundance; and, without the aid of the right inward principle, it will only heap up to you incentives to pride, and means of indulgence, or, at the best, only cares, and vexations, and vanities. I know this, for I see it. How little calm is there in life around us! How little soul-sufficing satisfaction! On every hand is restless seeking; on every hand, ill-suppressed complaint. Here and there, indeed, is the true calm, the true satisfaction: yet it is nowhere but in the heart whose inmost and dearest life is love, purity, faith. I see, too, that all which the ministering world can offer, is transient, phenomenal, vanishing away. Calamity comes down like an avalanche upon our gathered stores; or bereavement makes the full house void and desolate; and then there is no stay for us, but that inward principle which can look through all, to the love of God, and the hope of eternity!

My friends, these, with me, are not mere words of course. From this imputation above all things would I rescue this pulpit. If I believed that this pulpit must utter certain things as a matter of course, and no otherwise are to be received; if I believed that it must stand thus isolated, that it must have a language of its own, that the very truths it utters are to be truths nowhere else, I would never have entered it. I would never stand here, a mere automaton preacher—to beat the air—to pour forth words, which should only be reverberated from these walls, and whose effect, like the echoes that return to me, should die at my feet—to declare doctrines on which there should be a sedulous attendance to-day, and, to-morrow, no more to do with them, than if they were uttered in a dream. I cannot consent to spend my life in such a formal, such a merely spectral ministration. I would rather take my stand by the way-side, or in the surburban groves where Aristotle and Socrates walked and discoursed; or become a lecturer—that noble calling of these modern times—in Lyceums and Library Associations.

But the more material question remains—how is the pulpit to minister to human welfare? On this subject, I must confine myself to two or three observations out of the many that present their claims to attention.

In the first place, then, the pulpit, in its ministration, must be at once comprehensive and practical. It should embrace everything that belongs to the moral and religious welfare of society; it should show that it intimately understands everything; it should assume, what I have maintained in general, that its province is, practically, to deal with everything. Let me say a word more distinctly of this comprehensiveness of view. It is true that the pulpit holds its own proper place in

relation to human improvement; it is not a chair of philosophy, nor the porch of the academy, nor a studio of art; but it is nevertheless to acknowledge its connexion with these ministrations, and in a modest and liberal spirit to take its place among them. It is to assume no air of loftiness but that which its theme gives it. It is no more a place of decisions and oracles than any other where the human mind is the interpreter. It is not God that speaks here, save as he speaks everywhere; but it is a fallible man.

But particularly in regard to its comprehensiveness, let me ask if it is not often left to be felt, that the pulpit does not recognise much that belongs to the moral interest and grandeur of life? Does it not coldly stand aside, or aloof, from the ardour of youthful affections, from the gushings of enthusiasm, from the pangs of the neglected and forlorn, from the infirmity and weariness of the beaten path of life? Are not men left to feel that the pulpit does not consider them — does not know them, in many of their most interesting emotions? The moral essay, the theological disquisition — what has that to do with the impassioned fervour which swells the human heart almost to bursting? The *parent* does not often enough consider *that*, in his child; he does not often enough consider the tears that fill the eye, the feelings that thrill that young heart. But still less does the pulpit consider all this in those who surround it. That band of human hearts should be like an electric chain to it. How many things, dear and lovely, are passing upon earth, and passing away from it, that should come to us here!—the lineaments of mortal love fading away into heaven — the holy hand of maternal tenderness, laid upon the innocent forehead—the clasp of affection, that could die for its object — the calm and resolved brow, that is ready to sacrifice fortune, fame, life itself, for its dear integrity — the sense of all things beautiful, and brave, and heroic, breathing in literature, in poetry, in the marble, and on the canvass, and thrilling through the heart of the world! — yet does one thrill of all this touch the cold and stately pulpit?

Again; the pulpit must be practical. Its business is with actual, conscious, instant life, or it is nothing; or nothing but a barren negation of all true power. I confess that this practical end of Christianity is of such absorbing interest to me, that I am not able, and I do not think that I ever shall be able, to discourse much to you on controverted doctrines. They should be discussed, indeed; but for many reasons, I think that the printed page, and not the pulpit, is the place for them. Other things press upon me here. I see that men are chiefly erring, mistaking, and falling into misery and ruin, on far other than doctrinal grounds. And while I see this — while I see that actual life is the very sphere of salvation or perdition to them, I cannot be for ever drawing the lines of metaphysical distinction, that never cross the path of life. I cannot weave about religion the wire-drawn meshes of a speculative creed. I cannot set it forth, weighed down under the cumbrous drapery of scholastic terms. I must deal with it as clothed with the flexible and familiar garments of modern and real life. That heavy costume brought from the middle ages to invest modern religion, seems to me fitted only to crush and to kill it. Or if it leaves any life, it leaves only a maimed, pained, burthened, and shackled Christian life. It may be called the armour of safety, the garment of salvation. But

I cannot account so, of what I call salvation. This great achievement is to be wrought out through free, energetic, spiritual action. It is to be wrought out, in the midst of life, and by the effect of life. It is not a church business, but a world business. The church is built for teaching, not for doing. It is built, doubtless, for excitement to doing; and for doing itself, if you please; but only for so much of the work as can be legitimately accomplished, within the time that is passed in it. To think to do it all up, here, is fatal to the end. It is treason to the designs of Providence. Life—life, I repeat, is the stage, the field, the battle-field, where the good fight is to be fought, and the glorious victory to be won. What is the religion worth, that springs up, and lives, and dies here? What sort of a Christian is he, of whose Christianity nothing but church-walls and church-meetings ever see anything? Nay, and what do church-meetings see of such a man's Christianity when his temper is tried, or his interest touched? I am afraid to tell you what they see. But this, at least, I am impelled to say, as I look at the effects of an isolated Christianity—I say, my friends, that I am afraid of churches; I am afraid of church peculiarity; I am afraid of everything that is shut up within church-walls, with which common principles and common opinions are thought to have nothing to do. I am shocked at the pride, passion, and insincerity that can grow up in such places, when cut off from the world. I fear that, in some respects, the religious *morale* falls below the social *morale* of the country. There may be less of gross vice admitted into it; but how is it with evil speaking, oppression, duplicity, and breaches of good manners? There are things said and done in religious bodies, which, I fear, can scarcely have any good report among honourable men in the world. It avails very little, that men in such circumstances call one another brethren. It availed very little to Abner in the ancient story, that Joab "spake to him quietly," and while doing so, "smote him under the fifth rib."

Official persons and bodies are always liable to err, just in proportion as they set at defiance public opinion; and, therefore, in this country, *religious* persons and bodies are, of all, the most exposed. Preachers are constantly saying in the pulpit what they would never venture to say anywhere else. They utter denunciations, nowhere else to be endured. Or when the pastoral bond is broken—broken for good cause, perhaps—broken at least very willingly—then both pastor and people utter commendations to one another, in their official capacity, which everybody knows to be insincere. And why? Because it was a *religious* connexion! A distinguished clergyman* said ten years ago, and printed the declaration, that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was the most unprincipled court in Christendom. I do not pretend to decide whether this was true. But if it were true, why was it? Because it was a *Christian* Assembly! It is because the Church thinks itself entitled to stand aloof from the judgment of all mankind. This presumption, I hold, must be broken down; these battlements of pretension must be levelled with the dust. The Church is not an *imperium in imperio*—an empire by itself. Religion is a ministration to the world—not a defiance of its scrutiny. The Church is to be the handmaid of general freedom, virtue, happiness; and not to lord it over that great heritage. It is this fatal separation from everything else, that

* Rev. Andrew Thompson.

has caused almost all churches and pulpits in the world to fall behind the civilization of the age—behind its knowledge, science, liberty, and general liberality. The light that is in the world is not suffered to penetrate through these church barriers. Where, in the general recognised classical literature of the world, do you find any bigotry, any religious fanaticism, any narrow technicality of faith? All these are shut up in the dark fastnesses of exclusion. I hold that religion is, not only out of its place, but that it is not safe in those fastnesses; any more than it is in monasteries, or in the dungeons of the Inquisition. There is *no safety* for a right principle in girdling walls, though they be built as high as heaven; there is no safety—but only the more danger. There is nothing but the severe, scrutinizing, searching watchfulness of all mankind, that can keep anything safe; any institution, any government, religious or political. To this all human interests are now irrecoverably committed. And to this all religious interests, if they be human, must be committed.

Do I say, then, that the Church is a mere worldly institution, destined to take its fate with all other worldly institutions, having no pledge from heaven for its protection and perpetuity? These things I do not say. I say that the Church is a religious institution, having the pledge of its continuance in its own eternal principles, and in the power of Almighty God—not in the wisdom or device of this man or that man—of this body or that body. But I say, too, that it is a religious institution for the benefit of the world. And, therefore, I insist that it ought to stand in the presence of the world—in the open day-light of the world; that its proceedings, its principles, its creeds, must bear universal scrutiny; that God hath appointed no man, neither priest nor pope, to be the unquestioned expositor of his truth; that all men should be allowed, without threat or frown, freely to judge for themselves. If not—if men will have it otherwise—if they will strive to maintain an unlawful Church ascendency; if they think by warning or intimidation to keep out inquiry, or to keep in acquiescence, they know not the age they live in. It is not what I say or do, or another man says or does, that is material here; the matter, be sure, has got quite out of our hands. Churches may be builded or burnt—congregations may rise or decline—names, sects, may stand or fall—I care not; with reference to the progress of truth, to the essential modification of existing opinions, I care not. A hundred liberal churches in this or a kindred country may be burnt or beaten down—it would not disturb me a moment. In the great heart of the world lie the causes of progress; in spreading freedom, in the spirit of literature, in the growth of knowledge, in the divine elements of truth itself. Churches may set themselves against this progress; they may build up new barriers and battlements against it; but it is in vain. The age is passing by them, and they will yet stand, if they stand at all, like the dismantled towers of the feudal ages—monuments of times that have passed away.

I have dwelt longer than I intended on the comprehensive and practical character implied in the true consecration of the pulpit to human welfare, and must compress within a few words, the further views which I wished to submit to you, of its appropriate mode of action and influence.

With *respect*, then, with *love*, and with *sympathy*, should the pulpit address the people. He who does not feel these sentiments towards

mankind, should find some other organ of communication with them than the pulpit. He may imitate the poetry of Byron, or adopt the cold philosophy of Hobbes, or select for his weapon the blighting satire of Voltaire; but to him belongs not the gentle and solemn ministration of the Gospel. I advocate no soft effeminacy in the pulpit; no lax complaisance towards human nature; no weak sympathy for it that compromises any lofty principle. That, indeed, were both scorn and cruelty towards it. *Let* the pulpit be bold. Let it clothe itself with indignation against sin. I would see more than I ever yet saw, in the pulpit, of that honest and manly indignation. Let its law be strict, and its scrutiny piercing,

> ——"the tent that searches
> To th' bottom of the worst."

But in all this, there is nothing inconsistent with the sentiments which I advocate. I respect, whom I warn: I love, whom I would recover: I sympathise with him, that I would save. From the bosom of these affections proceeds the only true fidelity; and not one of them can be spared. Whose voice, to recall from wandering, so powerful as the parent's? And why? Because, it is with mingled respect, and love, and sympathy, that he speaks to his erring child. Let one of these be wanting; and he might as well speak to the dead; he can do nothing.

The pulpit in this respect must conform to the great laws of human nature. And this principle I do not set forth, as demanded by policy, but by truth. The human heart is entitled to respect. Amidst all its debasement, there are in it solemn monitions and mementos of better things to be recognised. I cannot fling scorn upon its awful depths. I cannot with rude blows strike the guilty heart. The fallen throne that human hands have built—the shattered tower that beetles in sublime desolation over the land that it once ruled, must not draw from me a veneration that I will not give to the mournful and monitory ruins of humanity. And if that ruined greatness of a human soul casts its dark shadow over the world unknown—if there is before me a being who may sink to hell, bearing with him—more than the wreck of an empire—bearing the world of his affections with him, down to woe and agony; it is not with slight and scorn, but with awe, with a horror of reverence, that I must look upon him, and speak to him.

Nor yet from our love as well as our respect, is an erring nature shut out. It is written that "*God* so loved the world, that he gave his Son to die for it." I cannot help feeling as if that love of God, paternal and pitying, takes the part of its poor, erring child, against the cruelty, and contempt, and misanthropy of his fellows. Men hate us. God loves us. Men denounce us. God loves us. Men tread us under foot, or pass us by. God still loves us. Men, sometimes with seeming satisfaction, doom us to hell. God yet loves us; and gave his Son to die for us; that he may raise us to heaven. Thou who art most fallen, forlorn, neglected! remember that. Remember that there is one that loves thee—thy Father above, who can never hate thee. All other love may fail thee; yet shall that love never fail thee. For thus is the comparison set forth: "Can a mother forget her child? Yea, she may forget; yet will not I forget thee."

Finally; sympathy should flow out in all the ministrations of the pulpit. I see this pulpit, not as a piece of carved work—not as clothed

with crimson and gay adorning: but I see it, and feel it, as softened and clothed all over with human sympathies. It is the altar of respectful, friendly, and affectionate communings; and is to give living expression to all that pertains to sacred, human fellowship. In this respect, among all public situations, it stands alone in the world; and if it fails in this point, it will be wanting in the true consecration to human improvement and welfare.

The fortunes of men—the fates of a human life—seem to me to be but rarely contemplated in the light in which they should ever present themselves in this sacred desk. In the great field of human probation, there are no clergy and laity, no learned and ignorant, no rich and poor: there is a destiny for all, in whose presence the varying circumstances that clothe this life, are but the modes and fashions of an hour! And it offends me when I see any man making a parade of coming down—either to bestow a charity, or to do a kindness called patronage, or to teach the people. He has to go up, if he would understand it, to reach the sublimity of his vocation. He has to go up, if he would feel the true and enlarged sympathy of humanity. It is through the want of this true sympathy that many offices are now base, which with it, might be high as heaven, and beautiful as the ministration of angels. It seems to be rare that we find any man great enough to be *a man*—a breathing soul of the great humanity—and not being able to be a man, what does he become? He becomes a minister, conscious of power and influence; or a nobleman, conscious of rank; or a rich man, of wealth; or a celebrated man, of fame. The real sinks into the phenomenal; the man becomes a mode; and life, intense, all powerful life, is but a fashion of living.

There is a greatness in this life beyond all that is called greatness. All earthly seeking—all business, care, weariness, and strife—is but the clothing of a deeper want—the heaven-sent need of virtue—of the happiness whose essence virtue is. That want, whether it pierces the world with its cry, or struggles in smothered silence, is the grand index of all human fortunes. Reality lives beneath all that is visible, wrestles amidst the turbulent passions, and heaves in the bosom of this world's restless tumult. In those depths of life, is conscience, empassioned yearning, conscious destiny; and from those dark fountains, flow out tears, sorrows, and sighings.

To communings with such a life, my brethren, is the pulpit consecrated. The thousand ties that bind that spiritual life, meet—it is an awful thought—meet, as it were, in the pulpit. And here it is that we are to touch those chords, that shall send thrilling into the depths of reality. Must not this ministration, then, be a living sympathy? Such was it to the heart of Jesus. If God is represented to us as all-embracing love; so is Jesus, emphatically, as all-embracing sympathy. Though sinless, he sympathized with the sinful. In that feeling he lived and taught, he suffered and died. And in so far as we can imitate him, that great example should be the model of all who preach his religion.

To such a ministration be this pulpit dedicated! All life will pass before it here; for no shadow of consecrated walls can drive out from any bosom, the spirit that is in it. All life shall come here, and here it should be recognised—the gladness and beauty of youth—the

swelling heart of manhood—the cares and anxieties of fathers and mothers. Young men and maidens, old men and children, shall be here; and all that life is—whether it is passed amidst joy or sorrow, amidst thrilling strains of music or "the solemn brood of care," amidst the gaiety of assemblies, or in the solitariness of reflection—amidst troops of happy friends, or by the desolate hearth of the bereaved and stricken one—all must mingle itself with the meditations of his holy place.

Yes, my brethren, I know whence ye shall come, and whither in a few days more, ye shall go. From the noise of busy streets, or from the bustle of crowded marts, ye will come; or perhaps from the surgings and soundings on, of the majestic, melancholy sea; from the din of manufactories, or from the tedious hum of school-rooms, or from the litigations of courts, or from the sighs of pain by the sick bed, or from the many-voiced utterances—questions, commands, children's cries, sounds undefinable—of domestic abodes; and will ye not ask for a calm hour, for a clear atmosphere, for the vision and comfort of things divine? God grant that ye may ever find them here!

And I know whither, ere long, ye shall go. The day will come, when other eyes than ours will look upon these walls, and upon these crowded streets. It is but a little time—and the last sound of our footsteps will have died away from these pavements; the last shadow of our form shall have passed from this threshold; and the places that know us, shall know us no more for ever.

But, thanks be to God! no dark despair, no overwhelming sorrow, mingles with these thoughts. When another generation shall fill and crowd the places where we now live—the walls within which we this day worship; our humble hope, and our trust, is, that we shall dwell in some loftier sphere, and wait the coming of those beloved ones to join us. "In an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens," may we say eternally—"blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever!"

A DISCOURSE

ON THE

CHARACTER AND WRITINGS OF W. E. CHANNING, D.D.

PSALM cxii. 6: "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

THE commemoration of the good man can never be too late, nor can he ever be held too long in our remembrance. In the oldest Christian churches, the Roman and the Greek, certain days in the year are consecrated to the memory of such; and often have I listened, not without emotion, to the solemn chimes of bells which thus celebrated the virtues of some venerated saint; with sounds of triumph and gladness up in the high air, above the turmoil of this world; up in the regions lying towards the world where he is gone. It is good for us so to remember those, who in faith and patience have gone before us; whose lives have been like our lives, whose sorrows, like our sorrows, whose strifes, like ours, and who have gained the great and last victory.

This is the anniversary Sunday, and I would make it a saint's day among ourselves, which reminds us of the passing away of one, long to be remembered in our churches — the lamented Channing! The news of this mournful event reached me in a foreign land; saddening the hours and days of absence from my own country. I could not join my brethren in the tribute so widely paid to him then; and I ask your indulgence to the attempt I shall make, to express to you my thoughts of him, on the present occasion.

His memory is fresh among us, and will be, I think, while we live. The impression he has made upon our minds is one, indeed, of a very remarkable character: and it is meet that we should inquire, after the first gush of our sorrows is past, what was the mission and ministry of a life like his. It is to this inquiry that I would direct your thoughts this evening.

The mission, then, of all true genius; the same in all ages; the same in all great men of studious lives; the same, whether displayed in writing, or in works of art, was the mission of Channing. It was to set forth the True, the Right, the Godlike; and to portray its loveliness and majesty. Genius, I repeat — that which is divinest in man — is, in its appropriate work, ever striving to unfold its own ideal of moral beauty and grandeur: this is its great vocation.

Permit me to pause upon this thought a moment; for it lies at the foundation of my present undertaking. Let the instrument used be

the chisel, the pencil, or the pen, consider what is, and always must be, the end in view. The sculptor, the painter, seeks to express some conception; and what is it, but the conception of the highest beauty or power? The poet, the novelist, always has a hero; and his hero embodies his loftiest idea of goodness, virtue, magnanimity. The orator, the preacher, when he ascends to the noblest discourse, labours to inculcate truth, right, duty; in short, the divinest excellence. It is with this that his bosom swells in secret; and this it is that he strives to pour forth in speech. This, then, I say, was the mission of Channing. And, certainly, I do not know the man of the present day, who has done more to stamp upon the world the sense of the True, the Right, the Godlike, than Channing. His work, in this respect, was not technical, not what is ordinarily called philosophical; that of the highest genius seldom is so; it was the work of inward meditation and prayer. Especially in him it was a sacred, a religious work. From the adoring contemplation of what God is, from that altar he brought the burning and luminous thought of what man should be. There was a consecration to him of his theme. Everything about it was invested with a solemn, religious light. He knew no true grandeur in man but a divine grandeur. He questioned much what the world calls greatness, however lauded and idolized: he had set up another and purer idea of greatness in his own mind; and no prophet of modern times, I think, has done so much to break down the idol, and to establish the true worship instead.

The forms which this labour of his life assumed, and the qualities of mind which he brought to it, demand our attention in this brief survey of his character.

The first form was preaching. This was the chosen vocation of his youth; it was the glory of his manhood; and only under the severe pressure of necessity did he relinquish this great calling. It was always attended in him with extreme exhaustion. I well remember, as doubtless you do, one of the last occasions on which he addressed a religious assembly; it was in this pulpit. Three weeks after, I met him on an excursion in the western part of this State; and he had not then recovered from the effort. Justly did he conclude that he ought to give up a function that was wearing so fatally upon his physical strength. This effect on him resulted from the character of his mind and sensibility, and from the idea he entertained of this great ministration. He did not think that a good sermon was a simple exhortation; that it was a bare repetition, however fervent, of truisms and commonplaces; that it was enough to say to the people, "be good." He did not mistake, as some seem to do, the aged John's traditional saying in the assembly, "dear children, love one another," when he was too feeble to say anything else; he did not mistake that for preaching. He did not listen to those who said, "labour not the matter so much; the Gospel is a simple thing;" forgetting that it is a deep thing, too. No; to preach, was to speak to a nature clothed with the awfulness of unmeasured capacities and unspeakable exposures; to penetrate its depths; to awaken its slumbering powers; to reason with its errors; to unveil its disguises; to convince it not only of its sin but of its sanctity; to make the man feel that he was too great a being for the littleness and paltriness of vice, too great for the world to have, and use, and wear

out; and to bring at length this erring, and wrestling, and suffering nature to prostrate itself before the cross of the all-perfect, suffering, and redeeming One, there to find peace, strength, and help divine.

This, I think I may say, though feebly stated, was his idea of preaching. And thus, thinking of this great function, he felt that there was no power of any mind however lofty, that it did not bring into urgent requisition. Preaching never seemed to him, for an instant, the discharge of a mere professional duty, the fulfilment of a formal task. It was the great action of his life. It was the greatest action that could be demanded of any life. He felt that never Demosthenes nor Cicero, that never Burke nor Chatham, had a greater work to do, than he had on every Sunday. He poured into this office his whole mind and heart. The preparation for it was a work of consecrated genius: it was as if, every week, he had made poem or oration. No wonder that he often sunk under it.

And then he brought to this task, thus highly conceived of, a very peculiar nature; a nature at once singularly rational and fervent, scrutinizing and imaginative, strong and self-restrained. The working of such a mind is far more laborious than that of a one-sided intellect. Often have I witnessed the patience and anxiety of his meditation, to say nothing but what was true, just, and wise. He would never lend himself to the popular and taking forms of pulpit display, wherewith either to alarm, or overawe, or astonish, or charm the hearer. He never attempted any graphic representation of heaven or hell, of the last Judgment, or of the sinner's peril; though no preacher, perhaps, had ever at command the stores of a richer imagination. But all was sober in his administration of religion. To utter the truth, the naked truth, was his highest aim and ambition. The effect, he was willing to leave with God, and with the heart of the hearer. He never seemed to labour so much to enforce truth, as to utter it; but this kind of utterance, this swelling, and almost bursting of the inmost heart to express itself, was the most powerful enforcement. There was always, however, a chastening and restraining hand laid upon the strong nature within; and this manner has led some, I believe, to deny to Channing the gift of the highest eloquence. I know not what they call eloquence; but this restrained emotion always seems to me, I must say, one of its most touching demonstrations; and surely that which reaches the heart, and unlocks the fountains of tears, is its very essence; and that which penetrates to the still depths of the conscience, that lie beneath tears, is its very awfulness and grandeur. Such was the eloquence of Channing. I shall never forget the effect upon me, of the first sermon I ever heard from him. Shall I confess, too, that, holding then a faith somewhat different from his, I listened to him with a certain degree of distrust and prejudice? These barriers, however, soon gave way; and such was the effect of the simple and heart-touching truths and tones which fell from his lips, that it would have been a relief to me to have bowed my head, and to have wept without restraint, throughout the whole service. And yet I did not weep; for there was something in that impression too solemn and deep for tears. I claim perfection for nothing human; and, perhaps, my idea of this kind of communication goes beyond anything I have ever heard. No words ever realized it but those calm and solemn words of Jesus Christ, at which the heart

stands still to listen; and which it is wonderful that anybody dares ever to dilute into prolix comments. But certainly no preaching that I have heard has come so near, in this respect, to the model in my mind — I say not irreverently, the great model — as the preaching of Channing. And I should not omit to mention another trait in his religious sensibility, that imparted to its manifestations a peculiar interest. And this trait seems to me so marked and unusual, as to be worthy of a moment's comment. In most men's religious feeling, I believe, there is something singularly general and vague. Their emotions revolve about this sacred theme rather than penetrate into it; and though it is bedewed with their tears, only the more do their thoughts glide about the surface. They weep; but they do not think: they do not meditate their religion deeply in their hearts. And thus their discourse has a general truth, without any discriminating pertinence; their words taken together have a meaning, but there is not a meaning in every word; there is no inward prompting to make them use the words they do use, rather than some other words of the same general import. The pen that writes them is not dipped in the heart. In short, you know that there is not any such reality in most men's religion, as is felt and seen in the sentiments that attach them to home, to kindred, to all the palpable interests of this life. But it was not so with the remarkable and venerated person of whom I speak. His thoughts on this theme, the deep and living verities of his own experience, had an original impress, a marked individuality, a heart-felt truth, and a singular power to penetrate the heart. His words had a strange and heart-stirring vitality. Some living power within, seemed to preside over the selection and tone of every word, and to give it more than the force and weight of a whole discourse from other men. Many have I known, so to feel this touching influence, not only in the church, but by the fireside and in the friendly circle, that they could scarcely restrain their feelings within the bounds of domestic and social decorum.

I must observe further and more specifically, concerning his preaching, that its constant aim was to discriminate the true spiritual excellence from everything false, imperfect, sectarian, and technical. Precisely as every great sculptor or painter labours to set forth the true beauty and grandeur, in opposition to false tastes and false schools of art that prevail around it; this did Channing, as a preacher. If you examine the great sermons of all ages, I think you will find none of them so marked with this trait as his. With him correction always went hand in hand with enforcement. This tendency to innovation and reform, has indeed always distinguished the American pulpit; as in the sermons of Edwards, Bellamy, and Dwight. To show the disinterestedness of virtue, for instance, was always a favourite task, with that school of Divinity known as the Hopkinsian school. And I have heard our friend more than once express his strong sympathy on this point, with the Hopkinsian theology. But with him, the work of reform was spread over the whole field of Christian virtues. Not the disinterestedness only of true goodness, but its absolute and universal superiority to everything else in man; its unrivalled majesty, its inexpressible beauty — in what a singular and original manner did he discourse upon these things! This was the aim that guided his pen and his speech — it was not a vain desire to praise his friends — in those beautiful dis-

courses, among his last efforts in the pulpit, on the characters of Tuckerman and Follen. But the aim was always apparent from the first. From his youth, he ever strove to give birth to his own glowing idea of the true Christian man. He could not bear that a shallow morality, or a mere worldly decency, or a vulgar fanaticism, or any distorted peculiarity of any religious class, should usurp the honours of Christian virtue. Of this great achievement, virtue, — the end to him and the explanation of everything in humanity and in the human lot, — his views were at once large and generous on the one hand, and on the other, strict and solemn. No preacher ever demanded a higher purity, ever set forth a loftier model; none ever addressed himself with a diviner faith and courage to the sharp conflict with pain and disaster. And why? Because he saw that every stroke of calamity was designed to cut and chisel that model, that work of God, into truer perfection; because he felt that the finished work was worth all the cost of all human suffering and misfortune. But the Christian so formed by solemn endeavour and self-denial, and suffering if need be, he did not desire to see clothed with a stiff and cumbrous garb. He did not wish the good man to hold any strange or constrained relation to those around him. We saw a picture under his delineation, with vigour and beauty in every trait, but never overlaid with any false ornament — a picture inspiring awe and winning love, full of nobleness, and full of tenderness, clothed with strength, and breathing candour and gentleness; it was the loveliness of spiritual virtue; it was the loveliness of the Christ. And when the character of this exalted and perfect One was brought into controversy, his whole interest in the question concentrated itself upon one point; that the glorious model should not be marred. He was little concerned at the prevalence of dogmas, about God or Christ, or about human nature, however opposed to his own opinion, save as those dogmas, in his view, tended to distort or lower the great ideal of spiritual beauty.

I have now fallen on a topic which, in an account of the peculiar mission of Channing, demands some expansion. It is impossible, indeed, to regard him as a preacher, without considering him as the advocate, in this country, of a more liberal theology.

It is no ordinary task to stand up against the most cherished religious ideas of a whole people. It involves sacrifices and trials, which those only who have shared in the undertaking, can understand. Who can doubt what position Channing might have held among our great religious sects, if he had stood among them and of them! It is one thing to be welcomed on every side; it is another thing to be, on every hand, repelled with horror.

The positions are sufficiently distinct even in the abstract statement; but no abstract statement can fairly convey the question which is presented for the mind's trial. There stands, on the one hand, an ancient, time-hallowed church, Roman or English, Lutheran or Calvinistic; it embodies wealth, numbers, influence; it ranks among its supporters, communities, and nations; it is strong in prescription, in custom, in usage; it bears long-accustomed honours in its name and fame; it is clothed with old and venerable associations; and many good and venerable men belong to it: the nobility, the piety, the goodly social array of the land, perhaps, is there; the chains that weave them-

selves around tender and susceptible hearts, draw to that communion; virtues that adorn society, names that win respect, shed their halo around it. How many influences unite to draw the mind thither! It is respectable to stand in that old, and wide, and rich heritage. It is safe. It is agreeable, it is grateful to throw one's-self on the bosom of universal esteem and respect. It is painful, it is a bitter pain—like that of martyrdom—to fling one's-self upon the swords and spears of hostile opinion; to meet the wounding glances of all-surrounding distrust: to find one's very friends turning upon him the cold and forbidding eye of reproach and sorrow. Those who stand within the protected pale may smile at this representation; but it is because they know not what *it is* to stand without it.

Honour, then, to the men, who like Luther, like Fox and Wesley, like Lindsey and Channing, have taken this noble stand—the stand for principle, for conscience, against all worldly ease and worldly respect. They have ranged themselves beneath the banner of Him "who was despised and rejected of men," and of those noble apostles of reform, "whose names were cast out as evil." Let those who, with similar convictions, have chosen a different part, take their comfort; their stalls and their livings, let them hold; their warm place in the embraces and smiles of society let them hold; they can have no more; to other men than them, belongs the praise of courage and magnanimity, of God-fearing truth, of a conscience fearing none but God! This praise belongs to Channing: and the day is coming when, far and wide, it shall be rendered to him! In the darkest hour for his opinions, he stood up fearlessly for their defence: and the time has already come, when the heaviest burthen of the reproaches that fell upon him, is rolled away; when the cause he espoused, stands before the country in unimpeachable honour.

I freely admit that Channing's especial vocation did not lie in the field of sharp logical conflict. But there is one of his productions—I allude to the Ordination Sermon at Baltimore—of which I think I may say, without any extravagant eulogy, that there never came a more polished weapon from the armory of polemics. Never were more acute distinctions more admirably put, than those with which he set forth the true principles of Scriptural interpretation, nor more convincing statements offered, of the essential inconsistency of the popular Theology, both with itself and with sound reason and morality. On the Trinity, in particular, I am persuaded that difficulties were lodged in many minds by that Discourse, as there were in my own, from which that doctrine could never be relieved. At the same time the Discourse was characterized by a simplicity and beauty of style, which at once brought it down to the humblest minds, and carried it up to the highest.

But the great vocation of Channing as a controversialist, was that upon which I have all along insisted; it was to set forth the beauty of religion, to commend it to the highest nature, the most exalted reason, and the purest feeling of his readers and hearers. It was most fortunate, I think, that the great leader in this controversy, should have been the fervent worshipper of the loveliness of religion, rather than an abstruse metaphysician, or a barren critic. And certainly, to my thought, religion was never invested with such a charm in this country, as in the glowing page and speech of Channing. I remember one of

his hearers and parishioners saying, many years ago, "Mr. Channing has a great idea of God." How remarkably true and how significant was the observation, all who have listened to him, must be sensible. His idea of "the Father," came nearer to that of the great Teacher, than that of any person I ever knew. And then the grandeur of the filial relation to Him,—the brotherhood of all men, and the glory of the spiritual man eclipsing all other glory,—what living themes were these in all his preaching and in all his writings? I cannot doubt, and I have heard it admitted by those of other communions, that they have produced an effect upon the whole Theology, preaching and religion of the country. That these central ideas often occur, and indeed are constantly repeated, in his writings, is not only undoubtedly true, but it is a peculiarity of which he was very well aware, and for which he had, as he conceived, a sufficient defence. It is so only, that the moral philosopher, the preacher of spiritual truth, can make an impression of himself upon the age in which he lives. Versatility should be the attribute of the dramatist, the essayist, the writer of fiction; but the strength, the significance of the Reformer, lies in concentration; the stamp of the Apostle, is unity.

If we pass now from the controversial labours of Channing to those writings that first spread his fame beyond his own country,—I mean the writings on Milton and Bonaparte,—we still meet with the same character, the same purpose, the same unbroken unity of his intellectual life. In Milton he wished to portray a great soul, endowed with the most exalted faculties, enriched with the most ample culture, animated with the noblest purposes, fired with the love of truth and freedom, and pouring itself out in majestic thought and style; and by just desert taking its place among the few really great minds of the world. In Bonaparte he found greatness of another stamp; and he has done more than any other writer, to assign to it the humbler place that it ought to hold in human estimation. He saw this greatness "standing where it ought not;" the idol of the world's admiration. He saw this extraordinary man, the enemy, the despiser and destroyer of human happiness, the ravager and despoiler of nations; without one human sympathy; a being whom nobody ever loved, nor ever pretended to love, unless it were the wife whom, in his cold and reckless ambition, he cast from his bosom; and yet to this man he saw everywhere commemorative statues and arches rising, busts and pictures of him filling the palaces and cottages alike, of the very countries which he had swept with his armies and crushed with his despotism; *his* name the great name that rang through the world, from the wilds of America to the steppes of Tartary; and his spirit burned with indignation at the spectacle. What! he said; is this Christendom, that pays such homage to the grandest impersonation of inhumanity that the world ever saw? Are these the favoured countries that worship the name of Christ, the name of the meek and lowly One, thus prostrate before an idol that bears not one trace of the Christian grandeur? He could not live amidst this state of public sentiment. It shocked all his moral sensibility; it was at war with all that his life was labouring for. He saw before him the enemy, not of his person indeed, but of his most cherished convictions. He felt as if a worse thing than the actual despotism of Bonaparte were overshadowing the world. He feared lest that gigantic phantom of power

should come to reign over the *minds* of men. And he boldly met the whole tide of public opinion by declaring that the greatness of this man was *not* the true greatness; that it was greatness comparatively of an humble order. It has been thought by some that he did not do full justice to the great powers of Bonaparte, such as they were. Perhaps he did not. But, we must observe that the strength and the victory of his argument, did not bear so much upon the powers of this extraordinary man, as upon his purposes. He maintained that his purposes were all selfish and ignoble; that to rule the world, not to bless it, was his single passion; that into the aims and actions of his life was never breathed any large and wise design; and that a man, of whom all this was not only true, but was in fact the universal estimate, is never to be accounted one of the truly great beings of this world. And is it not true; and indubitably true? You may say that even in the character of Satan there is a kind of greatness. And if there is a realm in which such a being reigns, there let him be called great. If there are kindred natures that can accord that homage, let them accord it. But let not us be called upon to sympathize with it. If the very glories of humanity, are truth, sincerity, generosity, beneficence, magnanimity, likeness to God, let *that* never be accounted the greatness of a man.

The publications which next demand our notice are those upon the subject of slavery. In these writings we still see the same great and generous mind at work, engaged in its natural and rightful vocation, the expounder of duty, the vindicator of lofty light and reason, the defender of sacred and eternal principle against all human convention. I honour this noble champion of the oppressed, while I have some doubts as to the practical result to which his reasonings lead him. That is to say, I have no doubt what is to be felt, but I have some doubt, I have much doubt, and difficulty, as to what is to be done.

This is not the place to discuss the point; for it requires a discourse of itself. Nor is it demanded of us in considering the writings of Channing. For his mission was, not so much to propose remedies, as to arouse the public conscience. He did not connect himself with any specific associations or measures for relief, but simply entered that great field of discussion which is the rightful domain of all intelligent minds; of all men who are not prepared themselves to be slaves.

This is not only our rightful province, but it is the only province open to us. Direct interference with slavery is out of our power. The only legitimate influence we can exert upon it must come in the form of argument. This was the chosen field of Channing. Who will say he had not a right to enter it? How he acquitted himself in this field, is, indeed, the question; for the right of discussion is no guarantee for right discussion. On this question there will, of course, be different opinions. To say that I do myself agree with him in every point, is more than one independent mind can well say of another.

But, passing by all questions about the philosophy of the case, and the methods of relief, I cannot refuse to see, in the general conduct of this argument, a master's hand, a work throughout of unsurpassed strength and beauty. Never, anywhere, I think, have I more felt the power of Channing's mind and style, than in these writings. It seems as if the nerve of moral indignation had compressed and clenched his thought within the narrowest possible compass. The themes, indeed,

were well fitted to touch a mind like his. What a *man* is *worth;* what is the sanctity of a soul; what is the sacredness of a nature allied, affiliated to God; and what is the wrong of setting a human foot to crush down that nature; what is the wrong of bringing a mass of mere earthly conveniences and pleasures to extinguish that spark of heavenly fire, only that *they* may be brightened and warmed for a moment; what is the wrong of chaining an angel-nature to the plough that tills our fields, or to the chariot that rolls upon our highways; all this is set forth in burning words, which, when all this angry disputing shall be done, will stand as golden mottos in the books of emancipated tribes and races of men. Yes; all this is true. I speak not of those who, involved in this relationship without their own agency, feel the tremendous moral solecism which it involves, and would gladly escape from it. But for the slave-holder, that defends his position as a lawful and righteous one, or means to hold on to it, right or wrong, because it is a matter of property, I say, all this is true; it is terrible truth; it is truth too high for any mortal hand to beat down. Let men reason as they will; let them defend, explain, qualify, soften the matter as they will; my heart tells me that I was not made to be a slave, and I believe that every man's heart tells him the same thing. The slave-master's heart tells him that, and it would revolt at the supposition that any combination of circumstances, any leagued principalities and powers, though they were an hierarchy of angels, should crush out his nature's birth-right, by making him a slave. And if he will voluntarily inflict this condition upon another, I deem it not too solemn to remind him of a WORD that says, "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

It remains to advert for a moment to the Addresses delivered by Dr. Channing on temperance, on peace, on self-culture, and on the general improvement of society. Those on self-culture have had the widest spread, and the most grateful reception. They have spoken a word to human labour; one that it long needed, and perhaps I may say, waited to hear. They have taught the labourer that he is to rise, not out of his condition, but in it; that toil, reasonable toil, is not his enemy, but his friend; that true self-culture is possible to all who have the wisdom and the will to seek it. It has been a new word to multitudes, full of comfort and guidance, full of grace and truth.

But I need not dwell upon this, nor upon any of these Addresses in detail; it is only necessary to name them, in order to call them very distinctly to mind. And what is it, beside their general manner, the almost unequalled beauty of style, and the rich imagination with which they are adorned; what is the specific quality that draws our attention? Still it is the same, the characteristic trait which I have constantly endeavoured to unfold; it is the lofty ideal of human duty and welfare. Nothing in the mind of Channing, nothing from first to last of all my acquaintance with it, ever struck me more than this. Always, on all subjects, on all occasions, he seemed to have a thought beyond everybody's thought that he conversed with, beyond everybody's thought that he addressed. And God had given him the rare power to make that thought a living thing, to clothe it with a strength and beauty that sent it far into the world, and attracted to it the attention and admiration of multitudes.

This, I have said, was the peculiar mission of Channing; and can

there be any nobler mission than this, or any more truly useful? If there be any to whose utilitarian imagination such a life seems to be dealing with useless abstractions, let me ask them for a moment to reconsider that opinion. What are the springs that move the world? Thoughts; nothing but thoughts. Passions, do you say? But passions imply thoughts — proceed from them. What are the springs, again, that carry the world upward, and onward? Thoughts of duty, of virtue, of spiritual beauty, of true greatness. Men cannot patiently live amidst purer ideals than are realized in themselves. They may not reach them, may sink far below them for a time; but they cannot be content with that conscious degradation. Let me put true moral ideals into circulation, and they will renovate the world. More than ever before is this true now. Let me confront the strongest and deepest-founded institution in the world, and show, by the light of better thinking, that it is an unjust, base, and hateful institution, and it cannot stand. The first blow that is to be struck in every great cause, whether of political right, personal freedom, individual duty, of temperance, peace, prison-discipline or factory-service, is to be struck by the thinker. How shall men set themselves to amend anything, till they are brought to think that it is wrong, or to improve anything, till they perceive that it can be made better? There is no power, no engine in the world, like the just and great thought. It is said that the application of steam, with its thousand-fold enginery, is to change the world. But it may change the world, and make it no better. Not such is the instrumentality of the moral power. The Fultons, Watts, and Arkwrights of the moral world, will work out a greater change, and to more glorious issues. Among such our Channing holds a lofty place; and I believe that the influence of the thoughtful and meditative life he lived, shall not cease, till thought itself ceases to be enshrined in mortal speech.

I have thus spoken of his preaching and writings. I have now a more difficult task; to speak of himself. To penetrate into the interior mind and character of another, is always a delicate office; still more so, if he be one whom we have venerated and loved. My fear is *not*, lest I should praise him too much; but lest I should draw from the recollections of personal and familiar intercourse more than I ought. It is not, I repeat, lest I should praise him too much. For strange as it may seem to you, I have no desire to eulogize him. There is a sadness that breaks the vein of eulogy. There is a sorrowing for departed worth, that makes our human admiration seem a poor and vain thing. My aspirings, my very thoughts that aspire, weighed down by the sense of our misfortune, seek not the heights of honour, but seek the grave rather, saying only, — "let us go and die with him." I feel, too, and justly feel, that his fame needs not the contribution of my humble praise. Let the young who have died before they could put the noble thought into action; let the obscure whose greatness never found meet expression nor due acceptance — let such be praised. But for him whom we lament, what needs there but the simple and sincere commemoration of what he was? Let me then speak of him as he was; as I saw him and knew him.

Intimacy with him, I may observe, was a rare thing; and even where it existed, it was attended with restraints, not usual in the closest friendship. Where there was perfect freedom of *mind* in intercourse with him, there was not the perfect freedom of manner that ordinarily follows it. It has been said of Washington, that none of his military compa-

nions could freely lay their hand upon his shoulder. The same was true of Channing. He was a person of a delicate frame, but of a great presence.

But I must not leave this topic, the restraint, that is to say, imposed by his presence, without attempting some explanation of it. And indeed I think it is proper to give a distinct place, and perhaps the first place, to this topic; because many have felt, and I suppose painfully felt, that of which I speak; and felt it as the first thing that drew their attention on their introduction to his acquaintance.

It is, then, extremely difficult, to be at once a man of deep, earnest, continued thought, and a man of society. When fixed attention to some theme has been channelling its way in the mind all the day long, it is not easy at evening to turn it into the varied flow of easy, and perhaps sportive conversation, yielding itself to all the impulses of surrounding and miscellaneous society. The very fibres of the soul have been strained till they are stiffened into a certain form, and it is not easy for them to be relaxed. This tendency can be counteracted only by much intercourse with society; and where ill health imposes upon a man almost entire seclusion, the difficulty of course is very much increased. Let the nature so exposed be one, moreover, extremely sensitive and delicate, and it is still harder to bring it into the play of free and easy intercourse. Add to all this the effect of a certain factitious reverence in society for him who bears the clerical office; let it be such as to forbid, if I may say so, the free encounter of wits, with the literary, professional, or intelligent men that surround him; let them choose to exclude him from their occasions of natural and unrestrained intercourse; and it will be strange if he escape the influence of such a combination of causes. One may have a nature the most bland, gentle, and affectionate, that ever existed, and yet it will not be strange if, in such circumstances, he shuts himself up in his own thoughts, and indeed acquires a habit of pursuing out his own train of thoughts, so that he seems to be alone, even in society. I think, indeed, that this habit contributed more than anything else, to impart to Dr. Channing the air of isolation, and to those around him, the feeling of constraint. He was always pursuing out his own thought; he seemed, without intending it, to *use* other men; everything came into his crucible, and was melted and moulded into his form.

Not, I say, that he intended to make this impression; for he sought and longed for a perfectly free communication; and no conversation interested him more than that which, in forgetfulness of him, and of one's-self, and of everything extraneous, was a kind of monologue, a kind of reverie, the purest and most abstract idealism. Least of all must it be supposed that there was any assumption about him, or any stiff formality, or precision; anything that said, "now let us talk great talk." Never. He did talk greatly, because he could not help it. But his manner of doing it, his manner in everything, was the most simple, the most unpretending imaginable. At the same time he possessed a nature the most truly social. He regretted anything in himself or in others, that repressed it. More than once has he said to me, "I am *too serious.*" He longed to feel upon his spirit the free and genial breath of society. And all who have known him well, must have observed, for the last fifteen years of his life, the increasing liveliness, versatility, and happiness of his social nature. The earliest days of his manhood were his darkest; days of illness and seclusion. They

spread around him a shadow of silence, and over many of his after days a shadow of reserve. But into that shadow, every later year of his life seems to have poured new and more cheering light.

I have alluded to his social intercourse; but to unfold his character, I must speak more distinctly of his conversation. It was the best image of himself; better even than his preaching or his writing; because it was the free, unrestrained, almost unintentional outpouring of his mind, and that on themes as elevated as those of his more studied efforts. I have said that he regarded preaching as the *great* action of his life. Conversation was the *ordinary* action of his life. It was not his relaxation, but his action. It was that which showed the man, as the daily pursuit, the daily business shows other men. Prevented as he was by ill health, and, perhaps, by constitutional indisposition, from mingling with the ostensible enterprises and movements of the social world around him, this was specifically his mode of action, his daily vocation. And those who have not conversed much with him, can scarcely know what he was, can scarcely appreciate the richness or the beauty of his nature.

I wish it were in my power to give any idea of the extraordinary character of this conversation. On my first acquaintance with him, it was my happiness to pass a number of weeks under his roof. His health was then delicate; he went abroad but little; but his mind was left untouched by the frailty of his body; and I found it constantly occupied, and struggling with great questions. On the highest philosophy, on the highest religion, on the highest wisdom of life, all the day long he pursued the questions which these themes present, without ever slackening, or ever turning aside to ordinary and common-place talk. The range of his subjects was as great as their elevation; from the most recondite point in philosophy—the difference between relative and absolute truth — to the forms of philanthropic enterprise and political development around him. But his favourite themes were *man* and the *New Testament:* man, his condition, and the philosophy of his condition; the New Testament, Jesus Christ, his teaching, and the sublimest contemplation of God. Sometimes his mind ran upon the same theme, almost without interruption, for an entire week; yet there was never any weariness in listening, but the weariness of exhaustion. His view of every subject was original. I do not mean that it was singular, but that it was his own, thoroughly digested in his own mind; and I wish it were a little better understood, that this is the only originality possible to any mind. His imagination, at the same time, kindled everything into life, presented everything in new and multiform lights, spread around every point in debate such a world of illustration, that it seemed ever new, while it was ever the same. While it was ever the same, I say; and yet to a mind suffused and overflowing, like his, with the very poetry of every theme, *that* is the trial point — to adhere with severe, philosophical accuracy, to the very question. To say that he went beyond the reach of all other men of similar genius, is more than I do say; but certainly I was led to admire the remarkably sober and rational character of his understanding, even more than the beauty and wealth of his imagination. I must add, to complete the view, that the style of his conversation seemed to me as perfect as that of his writing; and I sometimes thought at the close of a day, and I still think, that if

the conversation of that day could have been taken and printed from his lips, it would have conveyed to the world as striking a proof of his great powers, as anything that has ever proceeded from his pen.

I must not leave it to be supposed, that in all this there was anything of the lecturer, the speech-maker, the maker of orations by the fireside; any talking, as if it were a duty to talk, wisely, or gravely, or instructively, or as if he thought light and gay conversation a sin or an offence; nothing could be farther from the truth. His conversation was singularly involuntary. The stream flowed and flowed on, because there was a fountain behind; out of that abundance he spake. Or if he had any intent, his manner was as that of one who would clear up his own thought, or would submit it to the judgment of another. He never aimed apparently to be religious, or spiritual, or instructive; and yet he was all these in the highest degree. You have heard of persons of whom it was said, that "they could talk of nothing but religion." The expression, you must have seen, was meant for praise; but it is a praise which I have no desire to claim for the subject of our present thoughts. And yet his conversation, though he never entered upon it with that view, was the very religion of life, the very religion of nature, the very religion of politics, society, business; the religion of every theme—that is, the highest and most sacred thought of every theme that he touched upon. So lofty, so commanding was his thought, so did it soar above all around it, so deep was its impression, that a conversation with him was often an event in life; a high beacon that shed its light over the track of future years. I remember conversations with him, I remember single phrases, and the tone in which they were uttered, as having made upon me an impression beyond the effect of whole volumes of moral disquisition. If I were asked to convey an idea of this impression, by repeating his words, the attempt were vain, because it would be impossible to give the manner and the tone. But those may imagine something of this, who remember the feeling awakened by him by his simple reading of a hymn; who recollect, how, to a dull and lifeless hymn, or to that which had been made so by ordinary repetition, he communicated a character altogether new; how it became, as it were, a new creation, beneath the breathing fervour of his touching emotion and utterance.

Indeed, there was this same singular impressiveness about his whole character. Let me attempt to speak of him in this larger view.

I have presented to you the picture of a man retired, reserved, isolated in appearance; of one who, for the most part, sat in his own dwelling, wrapped in meditation, or engaged in intellectual and elevated converse. But this was a being, though calm and reserved in exterior, all alive with energies, all alive with emotions, all alive with the feeling of what was going on in society around him, and in the whole wide world in which he lived. Calm he was in manner, self-restrained in fact, and in a degree as remarkable as his emotion was strong. Such was his self-control, that I thought at first it was coldness: the quiet and subdued tones of his voice, fell on my ear almost like tones of apathy. But I soon learned to correct that error. I soon perceived that he was accustomed to put a strong guard upon his feelings, precisely because they needed that guard. I saw that his self-government was the fruit of much discipline. I had no doubt, that, in the bosom

of his youth there had been a burning volcano. I had no doubt, though I never saw tears in his eyes, that there were tears in his heart. I know of nothing more touching than this restrained emotion of the strongest natures.

And thus it was with every trait in his character; there was something in it that laid a powerful hold upon all who came within the sphere of its influence. That which is often general in other men, came in him to a point that penetrated the heart.—His was a love of the truth. There was no more characteristic trait of his mind than a disinterested love of the truth. It was evinced by his espousing unpopular opinions in religion, unpopular opinions on other subjects. But then it was no abstraction of truth that he loved. His mind seized upon the vitality of the thing, pressed it into moral service, pressed it into the closest contact with living interests, brought it to bear upon every-day life. Many books teach essentially the same doctrines that he taught, and yet are perfectly dull and uninteresting, because they never reach that point, never touch that spot, where doctrine becomes experience, and truth, a living consciousness. It was not so with him, nor with his teachings.—His was a great and generous philosophy. But it was not the philosophy of books. It did not begin nor end in books. It was not occupied with dry analyses and classifications. It plunged into the busy and bewildering maze of human existence. It grappled with misery, sorrow, want. It took the weary, wayfaring man by the hand and offered to help him. It strove after the solution of this life's mystery. It strove after self-interpretation. It descended into the bosom of experience with its deep meditation. Many hearers said of the preacher, "Whence hath this man this knowledge? How knows he so well our trials and struggles, having never been in the same situations? How, from his calm, and secluded study, can he bring out the guage, which is to measure the waters that are sweeping and dashing around us?" It was because he read in his own heart, the heart of all men.—His was a religion, a devoutness, the most profound, and sincere, and habitual. It was what no one who was with him could fail to see. But it was not some remarkable thing about him; it was a part of himself. It was not a religion professional, nor formal, nor prescriptive; not acquired, I had almost said. It was a religion inborn; surely it was born in him by the power of God. How touching was his veneration for the Supreme Glory! How touching were his devotions in the sanctuary! I have sometimes thought his public prayers, if they had been taken down by some hearer, just as they were uttered, would have made the most perfect body of devotions on record. And I do not mean by this, to say that his prayers were unequalled, though they certainly were so by anything that I have ever heard; but because I think that all known books of prayers involve an essential and fatal mistake in the very mode of their production. That is to say, the *writer* of prayers, is in a false position, and cannot possibly succeed, so as to do justice to himself, or to the task he has undertaken. He either sits down to imagine a prayer — a method that promises little; or else he sits down to make a prayer, *in order* that he may write it — a kind of sacrilege, it seems to me, not only fatal to the end, but of which, certainly, I would accuse no good and devout man. But I wander from my subject. Alas! the voice, whose utterances,

could they have been preserved, might help and comfort us now, is gone —is gone from among us; and shall never more be heard in our sorrowing churches!—Once more, and to finish this lame and imperfect sketch of what he was—alas! is it all the offering that we can make to his memory!—his was a goodness of heart the most gentle, tender, and considerate. I do not believe that one unkind action can be found in his life. I never heard him utter a harsh and hasty word concerning any human being. But here I must still discriminate. In some respects, he was a severe judge of men. Calmly and considerately his opinion was expressed; but it was strong, and clear, and, doubtless, unsparing. He seemed at times a rigorous censor. Especially towards sensual aberrations he was so, and had some right to be, since he showed no indulgence towards himself. But his rigour was always tempered with pity. Informed on an occasion of a person who had fallen in this respect, "Yes," he said, "I know that he has dishonoured himself," with such a tone of rebuke and sorrow united, as I can never forget. That was doubtless an awfully severe moral judgment which he once pronounced on the nature of retribution, but it was not harsh nor cruel. A representation of the pains to be inflicted by conscience in another life, having been mentioned as very impressive, "Yes," he said, "and it is all true; but, after all, does not the heaviest retribution for sin lie in the sin itself—lie in being a sinner—lie in the darkness and moral annihilation which sin causes, although the offender be unconscious of it?" Terrible thought! but one breathing lenity and compassion, while, at the same time, none but a mind awfully impressed by the evil of sin, could have suggested it. But so were all things tempered in him. He was, doubtless, from the very elevation of his sentiments, a strict and fearful judge of the characters of men; but how candid, considerate, and forbearing he was, all who have conversed much with him must know; how heartily he espoused every good cause, and every good work, the unequalled beneficent institutions of the city of his residence, must always proclaim; how sympathising and tender he was in his intercourse with the people to whom he ministered, they can never forget; and what was the gentleness, the sweetness, the loveliness of his life in his own home —but let the veils of domestic affliction cover and hallow, as they for ever will, those silent fountains of mingled, ever-remembered joy, confidence, and affection.

The thought admonishes me how much of such a mind and heart must ever lie in "dread repose," beneath veils that may never on earth be lifted; and I turn away disheartened from the work I have undertaken. Let me pause a moment to make one reflection on the great and good life upon which I have been meditating, and I will finish this sad and sorrowing tribute to the memory of Channing.

It is often said, that in the lives of literary and studious men, of scholars and authors, there is no action to signalize it, and to draw upon it the admiring gaze of the world; and that their memorial, instead of the shouts and triumphal arches that rise in the track of the conqueror, must shrink to the few pages of a cold and silent biography. It is often said, I repeat; so constantly indeed as to have passed into an uncontradicted adage; and yet, after all, is it true? What more significant action of a man is there, than the conversation he holds, and especially than the book he writes? What more significant is there in battles, in

voyages, or in the public works that spread health, fertility, or wealth, through a country? Does he who fights the battle with error and vice, does he who brings to light the far distant and before undiscovered lands of thought, ay, and regions of imagination like the heavens in splendour, does he who causes streams of healthful and fertilizing wisdom and gladness to flow through nations and through ages—does he nothing for note and admiration? Nay, what statesman or conqueror, what Cæsar or Napoleon, ever had his actions and his deeds actually commented upon, like those of Plato, of Dante, of Shakspeare, or of Milton? And many are the writings of a kindred genius, that deserve to be as thoroughly examined, as largely discoursed upon, as fully held up to the notice of the world, and *will* be, as any other series of remarkable actions. And so I believe will be the writings of Channing. They are models in *style* for our youthful scholars; and in *matter*, they are "enterprizes of pith and moment." They spoke to the time, to the country, to the world in which he lived. Every book, every essay that he published, was as a battle. Alas! it was a battle within, in which infirmity, ill health, sore and wearied nerves, went up to fight with the hosts of error, sin, and misery.

And when he fell in the conflict, when he died; true, there were no loud notes lifted up of wailing trumpet behind his bier, nor funeral guns to break the hushed repose of death, nor arches of marble, nor columns of brass, to speak to the passing ages; but what was the feeling that burst forth in the places that knew him—in the entire country that venerated him? No conqueror's wreath should be taken in exchange by me, for that simple feeling. The whole country felt, all sectional and sectarian prejudices forgotten, that a great man was fallen; that one who sat higher than in seats of office, had fallen; that a light which shone long time in our firmament, purely and brightly, was gone down; and that the land was left darker for its mournful departure. And those who knew him and loved him, looked on aghast, scarce receiving what they heard; scarce believing what they saw, deeming it strange, if possible, that such a one should be dead! I know not but I am uttering what is more personal than I ought to suppose to prevail far; but I am tempted to say,—was there ever a feeling so singular, so peculiar, so sad and wondering, as that which we have felt about the death of Channing! as if his life were a part of our daily light, and *could* not cease to shine upon us! as if his wisdom was a part of our daily food, and *could* not so fail us! as if his influence upon us had become one of the fixed ordinances of our being, and could never pass away!

Oh! in that feeling methinks there is an augury and an oracle. He *is* not dead to us, nor we to him. His words are still in our ears. We still walk in his light, though sorrowing now for a while—sorrowing most of all, that we shall see his face no more!

ERRONEOUS VIEWS OF DEATH,

WITH SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS THEIR REMOVAL.

Christianity was designed to introduce into the world new views and feelings concerning death. We seem to see its character and office typified in the visit of Jesus to the house of Mary and Martha, on occasion of the death of their brother. It was a house of affliction. Wailing and lamentation were heard in it, as they are, at one time or another, in all the dwellings of this world. But our blessed Saviour approached it in the calm consciousness that he was commissioned with a doctrine, and clothed with a power that would triumph over death; that death, in fact, was not the end nor the interruption of existence; that death, indeed, was only death in appearance, while, in reality, the spirit's life is progressive, ever-continued, immortal. What less do his words import, than the annunciation to the world of this new view of mortality? "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall *never* die"—shall die not at all, for ever! The apostles, in like manner, evidently considered themselves as commissioned to teach new views of death. They taught the Christian converts to "sorrow not as others who had no hope." They represented the coming of Christ as designed to "deliver those, who, through fear of death, were all their life-time, subject to the bondage."

The severity of this bondage in the ancient world, is sufficiently apparent from its funeral customs, and the whole tenor of its writings, and from the very terms by which they represented death as the great calamity of human existence. That language which has conveyed to us the largest portion of ancient literature, contains more than thirty epithets, all indicative of the deepest dejection and dread, which were familiarly and constantly applied to this event. Death was denominated the terrible, the mournful, the inexorable, the insatiable. It was cool, cruel, bitter, merciless death. It was represented as deaf to the cries of mortals, unpitying to their miseries. It was the dire necessity, the dark day, the fatal calamity, the iron sleep, the eternal night. Imagination can scarcely conceive of anything more appalling than the scenes of lamentation to which this event gave rise among heathen nations; which came to be a matter of custom and form, indeed, but which could never have been a matter of custom and form, without having originated in the most horrible ideas of the reality. In the houses of the deceased, for days together, their relations set up the most

dismal wailings and outcries of grief. They upbraided the very dead with ingratitude and cruelty for leaving them; so unreasonable and violent was their sorrow. Nor can we easily blame them, if we consider their actual and effective belief. Heaven was to them scarcely more than a dream of poetry. The future world was a world of shadows. In that dim and solemn land of vision, a train of unsubstantial phantoms passed before their eyes; but no living thought or feeling was there: the termination of life was the end of all reality. If it were so, indeed; if this conscious being were to cease at death; if every cherished thought and feeling which we grasp with all the strength of our souls, were doomed to utter extinction; if the venerated and the loved were to be lost beyond recovery; if all this were true, human nature could not refuse to its sad fate the tribute of inconsolable sorrow. If all this were true, we might justly say, Speak not to us of consolation: there is no consolation; there is no support for such a lot; nothing but dulness can bear it; nothing but indifference can tolerate it; and nothing but idiocy, we were ready to say, could be indifferent to it.

But "thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory" over these awful and overwhelming anticipations. Christianity, we repeat, was designed to introduce into the world new views of death and futurity.

But in this, as in several other respects, we apprehend that it has made as yet but a feeble impression upon the mass of those who have received it. We have not yet partaken of the cheerfulness, tranquillity, and triumph of him, who "has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light in the gospel." We have not so "lived and believed" in Jesus, as triumphantly to feel that we "shall never die!" There is more, we are tempted to say, of heathen despondency and dread among us, than of Christian hope and trust.

Indeed, the usual treatment of the subject of death is one, as we apprehend, which is scarcely in accordance with the spirit of the Christian religion. The place which the fear of death occupies in the religious emotions of multitudes, is one which Christianity by no means assigns to it. A consideration of this event, a dread of it, an activity awakened by this dread, a mournful countenance when it is mentioned, and tears shed at a funeral, with many, form too large a part of the whole sum and evidence of their piety. To think of death is too often considered as the very beginning of religion; to prepare for it, as the very business of religion; and to pass safely through that great ordeal, as the very end of it. Surely, the great object of our religion is, not to make us ready for some temporary exigency, nor to meet one dreadful event or moment, but to prepare for the sublime happiness and glory of an immortal life. This glorious aim would justly inspire, cheer, and elevate the soul; but to fix its attention too much upon one point in time, however serious, interesting, and trying in our moral progress and account — thus to fix the attention upon one point of dreadful apprehension, must narrow, depress, and darken the whole noble work of religious endeavour, faith, and fidelity. What effect this tendency of religious sentiment has had, both upon the prevailing religion and irreligion of the times, is a very serious and interesting inquiry, but one which we cannot now pursue much into detail, beyond the hints which will naturally arise in the prosecution of the subject. We will only observe, for the present, that mistaken and exaggerated ideas of the evil of death,

tend evidently to prevent the calm and settled expectation of dying, and rational and just views of the preparation for it. They are fitted to make the impression, that, to be prepared to die, we need some qualification analogous to so dreadful an event; that we need a state of mind altogether unusual, altogether beyond the simple tenor of a good life, altogether different from the calm and conscientious performance of our common duties. Thus, these ideas of death tend to resolve religion into a kind of unnatural excitement or overwhelming agitation. They also occasion the world infinite unhappiness; and, what is worse, an unhappiness closely associated with religion. That bondage through fear of death, from which Christianity was intended to relieve us, still lays its iron yoke upon the timid, the thoughtful, and the anxious; while, to the careless multitude, who need to be impressed, an image is presented, which is, at once, the more terrific and the more useless, because they "cannot discern the form thereof," and can give it no steadfast attention.

We must also express our apprehension that this subject has not always received a proper treatment from the pulpit. Death, it may be, has not been spoken of in that calm and temperate, though solemn manner, that becomes the Christian preacher. It may have been, sometimes, the argument of his impatience or his displeasure. It may have been made the occasion for eloquence or declamation, when it should have been of calm instruction, or sober and wise admonition. He who regards death as the greatest of calamities, as the most terrible thing that can befall us, has not yet learned Christianity. Sin is worse; odious and besetting vice is worse; and, to a good man, there may be many things in life that are worse than death; especially inaction, unprofitableness, and to disgrace his sacred calling. He who is ever resorting to this subject as a last argument, and on all occasions presenting it to terrify men into their duty, is yet in the childhood of the Christian life, if not among the weak and beggarly elements of a still earlier dispensation.

We must, also, venture to question much that often passes around the beds of the dying. The last scene should be as far as possible calm and quiet. The infirmity of human nature, the agonies of friendship in such an hour, we could speak of with indulgence; but it should be remembered, that it is our duty, as far as possible, by our resignation and fortitude, to sustain the sufferer, that we should not add to the last solemn trial of the sinking spirit the disturbing influence of violent agitation or clamorous grief. He who walks with his friend down that valley of shadows, has need to do it with a sustained demeanour, with a calm aspect, with a firm step, with a sympathy full of all human gentleness, with a purity full of divine and immortal hope. Above all, religion should not come to the scene of a death-bed, to urge, as a matter of course, its questions or its formalities. Let it speak its holy words, or rest in its holy silence of faith and prayer; but the dying hour is no time for intricate casuistry. Friendship may indeed whisper its anxious inquiry, but formality should speak nothing. Abstruse questions of faith or of experience should not then be agitated; still less should there be such stress laid, as with surprising frequency is done, upon the question, whether the dying man is "willing to die." No inquiry could be more unsatisfactory as a test of character; and, indeed,

it avails nothing but to spread among the living the false impression, that a preparation for another life, is a willingness, when it is unavoidable, to leave this. The reply of the pious and learned President Dwight to all such questions, contains a volume of instruction on this subject. "My life," he said to his inquiring friends, "my life must answer for me." Neither with technical questions, then, nor yet with any indispensable formalities, does religion approach the dying hour. Is there no prayer but that which is formal, loud, and vociferous? Can those who stand around the dying bed, if they were ever capable of prayer, fail, in the silence of their grief, in the extremity of their impotence, to lift up their hearts to God? In that scene where "reality is dealing with us," set forms should not, uncalled for, intrude themselves. To hear, as we have sometimes heard, loud and agonizing voices of prayer, that startled and shocked into temporary consciousness the sinking and bewildered senses of an expiring mortal, has struck us with a horror that overcame our awe even at death, and seemed to turn the solemnities of dissolution into sacrilegious disorder and confusion. So would we not have our own departure marked; but we would that stillness—where all pray in silence, where the affections of the spirit only move in the hushed atmosphere of death, where the soul breathes its unutterable thoughts—that stillness should settle down upon that last scene that is to usher us into the world of spirits!

But it is time that we should enter more fully upon our design in bringing this subject before our readers, which is, to consider some of those prevailing views of death, which are either erroneous, or which, being just, are nevertheless, through our want of Christian faith, suffered to occasion more distress and despondency than they ought. This discrimination of views that are wrong, or of views which, though right, are suffered to exert a wrong influence upon our feelings, will mark the division of the subject, which will govern us in what we have now to offer.

We shall speak of this subject, not without solemnity, and the tenderness due to a theme so affecting: of these we can scarcely fail; but we shall not speak of it with an awe that forbids us to reason upon it. We shall speak of it as those who, God helping, do not fear it with any excessive and unreasonable dread. We believe that it is the great course of nature, the appointment of God, a wise and good appointment, and that it is to be met with pious submission, calmness, and trust. We believe in One who has destroyed "the power of death;" who has come to deliver us from this very fear that has struck so deep a horror into the world, who has unfolded to us the bright and exalting hope of an endless and blessed life.

The dread which is felt of this event, has manifested itself in many popular impressions of the most erroneous and indefensible, as well as painful character.

We call death "the king of terrors," and, in the conceptions of the body of mankind, it is clothed with every terrific attribute. In the excess of fear, their imagination bodies it forth as an actual being. They speak of a person being "struck with death;" as if there were some dread power that ruled over the last hour of mortal existence. Even this popular phraseology, though it may scarcely be thought to indicate any error to which reflecting minds are liable, is not unworthy of a moment's attention, in connexion with the errors that are prevailing on

this subject. Death is the gradual exhaustion of our faculties, the sinking away of the powers of animal life, till they finally cease to act and to be. Now, this process may be hastened or retarded; may have its progress and its different stages; one power after another may yield: the faculty of speech, of hearing, of motion; but to fix on one particular moment rather than another, and to say that *now* the deceased person is "struck with death," is to use language without any foundation in philosophy, or support from observation. There *is* no power; there may be precursors, indeed, which the experienced may descry with greater or less certainty; but there is no power, that, at any one moment strikes a fatal blow; that fastens a hold upon its victim from which it may not be shaken; that sets its mark upon the diseased frame, as it were the mark of destiny: but "while there is life there is hope," and from any state of exhaustion the sinking faculties may rise to a briefer or longer continuance of life. It is not, in fine, by some mysterious harbinger, that death announces its coming. All decay is but dying; all disease is a progress towards death; every beating pulse is wearing away the channels of life; every breath of that heaving bosom is preparing for the time when it shall breathe no more.

There prevails also an erroneous or an exaggerated idea of many of the circumstances that attend the dying hour.

In particular, it is thought that this final event passes with some dreadful visitation of unknown agony over the departing sufferer. It is imagined that there is some strange and mysterious reluctance in the spirit to leave the body: that it struggles long to retain its hold, and is, at last, torn with violence from its mortal tenement; and, in fine, that this conflict between the soul and the body, greatly adds to the pangs of dissolution. But it may be justly presumed, from what usually appears, that there is no particular nor acute suffering; not more than is often experienced in life; nay, rather, that there is less, because the very powers of suffering are enfeebled, the very capacities of pain are nearly exhausted. Death is to be regarded rather as a sleep than an acute sensation, as a suspension rather than a conflict of our faculties. Our Saviour once said, in relation to this event, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." The martyr Stephen, we are told, "fell asleep," though he died amidst the blows and shouts of murderers. And the Scriptures denominate the pious dead, "those who sleep in Jesus." Death is the sleep of the weary. It is repose, the body's repose, after the busy and toilsome day of life.

We have all witnessed, perhaps, the progress of this change; and what was it? Let our senses and our understanding answer, and not our imagination. What was it, but gradually diminishing strength, feeble utterance, failing perception, and total insensibility? The change as it passed before us, may have been attended with accidental circumstances of mental experience or bodily sensation; but the change itself, death considered as an event, was only a gradual decline and extinction of the powers of life. This is all which we saw, or could know as necessarily belonging to this crisis in the progress of our being. And yet, from this ignorance, we allow ourselves to be troubled by the phantoms of agitating conjecture. We imagine, and indeed it is common to say, that because "no one has returned to tell us what it is to die," there must be some mysterious and peculiar sensation, some awful

physical experience attending it. But we see nothing, and we ought not to presume anything of this nature.

Neither are we to presume that death arouses the mind, in the last moments of its earthly existence, to the keenest attention, or to the most intense action of its powers. The subject, when distinctly contemplated beforehand, may do so; it may often do so in the midst of life; and well were it if it far more frequently aroused us to do, in season, the work of life. All we wish to say, is—and we wish to say it to preclude all appeals, at once, to mysterious fear and unfounded hope—that there is no peculiar, no fearful nor hopeful activity of mind amidst the solemnities of dissolution; that, in most cases, there is no activity. It is probable that the exhausted faculties usually sink to their mortal repose, as they do to nightly sleep; and that the convulsive struggles which are sometimes witnessed, are often as unconscious as those with which we sink to the slumbers of evening rest.

Nor, when the veil of delirium is spread over the mortal hour, can we regard it as the evil that it is often thought to be. It has seemed to us rather, in many cases, as a friendly veil, drawn by the hand of nature over what would otherwise be the agonies of separation, over the anguish that the parent would feel at leaving children orphans and destitute, or that the friend would feel in saying farewell to those who were dearest upon earth. Delirium often interposes, we believe, by the kind providence of God, where nature would be too weak, or faith too infirm for the trial.

Nor yet is there anything but fancy in what is sometimes said of the loneliness of the last hour. To the selfish and the bad, and in proportion as they possess this character, there is, indeed, solitude in death, and it may then be doubly felt. But to them there is solitude also in life; solitude in the chamber of sickness, in the hour of retired meditation, nay, and it is oftentimes deeply felt in the throng of society. If we deserve to have friends, they are with us in death, as truly as in life; so long as we are conscious of anything earthly, we are conscious of their presence. It may sustain and soothe us till the last moment of our stay on earth. "I walked with her," said one who laid down the remains of a beloved companion in a distant land, "I walked with her down the valley of shadows; I wiped the cold damps of death from her forehead; and saw her ascend to the mansions of the blessed!"

But we must hasten briefly to consider some of the errors that relate, not to the mode or circumstances, but to the nature, the essential character of this solemn event.

When our Saviour says, "He that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die," he adds, "Believest thou this?" The question might still be put to multitudes even in a Christian land, and, we doubt not, with the strongest implication of their unbelief. They do not believe it. Death is regarded as the extinction, rather than as the continuance of being. Whatever the words of our theology may say, the real impression upon most minds is, that death sunders almost all the ties that united us to our former existence; that it changes, not only our state, but our nature; that the soul, as it travels to the "undiscovered country," is passing beyond the borders of all that it has known, and sought, and valued. We are apt to feel as if, on the passage from life, we parted with all that our thoughts had familiarized, and our affections

cherished. But is not this an error? We take with us, so to speak, our thinking and conscious selves; and it is no vanity, but a simple truth, to say, in a very important sense, that ourself is our all; for it embraces all our mental acquisitions and attachments, our joys and hopes, our attainments of piety, our treasures of knowledge, all elevated and holy contemplations that we may have indulged in, all our habits of thought and feeling that are estimable and pure, all that is precious in happiness, all that is sacred in memory; and the record of all this, death will not erase, but will only impress upon it the seal of perpetuity. It has not erased these things, we may believe, from the venerated and pious minds that have gone before us. The dead, the departed, should we rather say, are connected with us by more than the ties of memory. The love that on earth yearned towards us is not dead; the kindness that gladdened us is not dead; the sympathy that bound itself with our fortunes is not dead, nor has it lost its fervour, surely, in the pity of an angel. No; if our Christian guides speak truly, it still yearns towards us, it would still gladden us. It still melts in tenderness over our sorrows. The world of spirits — we know not where it is, whether far or near; but it may as well, for all that we can understand, be near to us, as far distant; and in that fervent love, which knows nothing of change, or distance, or distinction, it is for ever near us. Our friend, if he be the same, and not another being — our friend, in whatever world, in whatever sphere, is still our friend, The ties of every virtuous union are, like the virtue which cements them, like the affections of angels, like the love of God which binds them to the eternal throne, immortal.

The evil of making this wide separation, this violent disruption of the present from the future, as well as of other prevailing views of death, is in many ways great. Our thoughts do not easily pass to live in the future, or to draw from it the motives of action. Our theological views of this subject, our contemplations of futurity, are too much like the ancient poetic dreams of an Elysian land, and a Tartarean region, visionary and ineffectual. There is a fearful retribution, there is a sublime beatitude, we admit; but our conceptions of both are vague and unreal; and our fear does not deter us from sin, and our hope does not allure us to purity and heaven. Between us and our future recompense, we look upon death as "a great gulph fixed," and it cuts off the communication of our thoughts. Between the good and the bad a great gulph is fixed, indeed, but not between us and the departed. Death is not that gulph; yet so we regard it. We do not sufficiently consider it as a stage, a necessary stage in the progress of being; as a natural passage from the childhood to the maturity of our existence. We are deterred, too, from the thoughts of futurity, by the imaginary glooms and mysteries of the entrance to it. Even the most attractive ideas of a future life, even a spiritual relish for its joys, and a conscience free from alarms, could scarcely overcome our reluctance to so fearful and dismal an approach to it. We could hardly think of home, or welcome the prospect of admission there, if we must pass to it through unknown conflicts and woes, if we could reach it only by braving the horrors of shipwreck, if we could gain its threshold only by rushing over the burning ruins of a conflagration.

Again; death is commonly regarded as the visitation of God's wrath,

as the fruit and punishment of sin. We do not forget the language of Scripture on this subject; "that death entered into the world by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." It is to be remembered, however, that, in many passages where death is said to be the fruit of sin, the word death is used figuratively; that mortality is not meant, but misery. This may be seen in the whole of that account which is given of Paul's experience and reasonings, in the seventh and eighth chapters of the epistle to the Romans, and in other instances. And upon the text before quoted, it has been justly argued, that the death which "entered by sin," is not the specific calamity of being mortal, but all the evil brought upon us by sin, including whatever is evil in mortality itself. That all this is meant by the word death, we say, has been argued from the circumstance, that it is not in contrast with all the benefits derived from the interposition of our Saviour. As these benefits include more than mere continuance of life, so, it is contended, the contrasted evil which sin is said to introduce, cannot be death to the body merely, but rather death to the soul; that is, misery, fear, disquietude, and gloom.* And it might be still more strongly urged, with reference to this point, that, if mortality were the specific and only evil meant in that passage, it is said to be removed by the interposition of our Saviour. This is the very point which we are labouring to establish. Jesus Christ has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel. He has presented new views of mortality. He has taught us, that it is the death of the body only; that the good man, that the spirit of goodness which is in him, that the intrinsic and intellectual being, "shall never die."

We are not, however, anxious to deny, for it is obviously true, that sin has given a complexion to this event; that it has, to a certain extent, connected pain, and doubt, and gloom, with mortality. In some respects, we can see this influence. Sin, which partly consists in the undue indulgence of the body, has made all our diseases more severe and painful. Sin, too, has clouded and darkened the mind, and filled it with inquietude and fear. Sin, then, we repeat, has given a complexion to this event. It has made our departure in this world, not a translation, but a death.

Yet, surely the departure, simply considered, is not to be regarded as an ordination of God's wrath, but of his infinite goodness. Whatever is universal and unavoidable, must always be held to be good. Sin, only, the choice of man, is essentially evil. Events, laws, the ordinances of God, are ever good. When we approach the dwelling where death has entered, when we join the circle of mourning friends and kindred, over which the mortal stroke has just brought its stupefying horror, or its heart-rending agony, when that solemn silence, that dread vacuity of death is around us, broken only by the sighs and shudderings of grief and despair, we are apt at first to feel as if we stood in some awful chasm where God is not, or in some overshadowing cloud where he is present only in displeasure. But when we remember that this is the inevitable lot, that there are thousands of such scenes passing every hour on earth, ten thousand human hearts rent with like sorrow, we are ready to ask, Can this universal fate be otherwise than an ordination

* I. B. Coppe, in Rom. v. 12.

of wisdom and goodness? Can the unvarying allotment to which all the creatures, to which all the children of God are subject, be vindictive? Can that which befalls all earthly beings, fills all time, and spreads before the eye of Heaven such an uninterrupted scene — can it be a signal measure of God's wrath? The catastrophe, in the darkest view of it, would not be so horrible as the supposition which thus explains it.

Besides, a dissolution of the body, and a departure from this world, results from the very nature and necessity of things. The human frame was not made to live always, and the earth, as evidently, was not designed to support the accumulating generations of mankind. Nay, more; departure, at some time or other, from this life, so far from being a penal requisition, must, to every reflecting mind, appear in the highest degree desirable. Let the question be put to our calmer and loftier reflections, and there can be no other answer. Would we live always? Would we always bear the burden of imperfection and infirmity? Would we always pant for knowledge and happiness that we cannot attain; and shall we ever cling to that load of flesh, and of "all the ills that flesh is heir to," which drags us down to the earth? No; we would die; we would depart; we would be released and be at rest. We might desire to mount on the winged chariot of Elijah; but it has pleased God to appoint for us a different way. Be it so, that it is for our sins, or that our sins have cast a shadow over the passage out of this world; shall we not then the more humbly and submissively yield ourselves to it?—not with terror, not with slavish dread, for God does not chasten, even for our sins, in unpitying wrath, but in tender mercy.

We would not, then, live always. Earth could not bear us. Humanity could not bear its load. Still more; the mind could not be satisfied. It would ask for other scenes, for other regions, for other sources of knowledge, for other fountains of joy. We would depart, then; and this is but saying, that we would die. We must yield our powers to the sleep of death, that we may awake to a new life. We must change the form and mode of our existence, that we may exist in a higher sphere. We must cease to live as men, that we may begin to live as angels. The unsightly worm must sink to inaction and death, that it may rise from its grovelling in the dust, that it may become an inhabitant of the air, that it may unfold its wings in a new region, and become the creature of life and beauty that God designed it to be. The soul, in like manner, must drop its "mortal coil," that the now undeveloped, the half-dormant powers, that mysteriously sleep within it, may awake to their own intellectual and immortal life. It may be as unconscious now of what it is hereafter to become, as the reptile that crawls upon the earth is of rising to the air and light of heaven. The transformation may be as great, and as much more glorious, as intellect is more glorious than dark and blind instinct. Nor may death be the soul's last transformation, "There shall be no more death," indeed; but there may be many changes in its modes of being, while it is passing from glory to glory, through its everlasting progress.

But we must not delay longer to consider some of those views of death, which are, indeed, more just than those already noticed, but which, nevertheless, are liable to be wrested into error, through the ex-

cessive dread which is entertained of this event. Mortality is not the interruption of being, nor is it any peculiar visitation of God's wrath; but it is still a serious crisis in our existence; and our views of it are not likely to be too serious, if we will only guard our seriousness from superstition, and from all irrational and extravagant influences of the imagination.

Death is a serious event, inasmuch as we are taught that "after death is the judgment." With regard to the formalities of that judgment, if it can be supposed that there are any formalities, we know nothing. The passages in Scripture which speak of a throne and a tribunal, or which speak of the soul as *meeting* its Judge after death, are evidently figurative, and teach us only the general truth, that there is a solemn and strict retribution awaiting us. We cannot *meet* the universal presence in which we ever are; in which we are now as truly as we ever can be, though we may be hereafter more conscious of it; and we cannot reasonably suppose that the soul is to be called to any literal bar. But there will be a trial of conscience, under circumstances which will give to conscience all its power; and if we could understand what that must be, we should feel that no formalities could add to the fearfulness of that coming hour. It will be enough to leave the sinful man alone with his conscience, to strip him of all the blinding delusions of sense and passion, to strip him of all this world's distinctions, and all its treacherous maxims, and its supporting example, and its flattering countenance, to throw aside every screen and veil of self-deception, and to empower memory, in that all-searching light, to call from oblivion every past misdeed, every erring thought, every guilty passion, and every secret and disguised offence; and this, we believe, is the judgment that shall be, in the presence of God and of conscience, after death. Men may do wrong now, and boast of it, may purpose evil and glory in its accomplishment, may oppress, and injure, and silence the voice of remonstrance; but an hour of unveiled retribution is approaching; the time is near when every evil gratification and unjust deed, shall become a piercing arrow of conviction. Forms, appearances, shall soon give place to realities; the body's enslaving control, to the spirit's action and life; and passion, indulgence, sin, to the manifested and the no longer mistaken judgment of heaven.

There is a passage in the memoirs of a distinguished author, which we confess, strikes us, whenever we read it, with nothing less than the profoundest awe. He mentions an individual, who, though entirely unlearned and ignorant, was accustomed, in fits of insanity, to repeat, with great fluency, long passages from Latin and Hebrew writers. The phenomenon drew much attention, and was thought by some to be capable of no other explanation than that of referring it to demoniacal possession. After much inquiry, it was ascertained that this individual had, in early life, resided in the family of a learned clergyman, who was accustomed to read and repeat aloud, passages from his favourite authors; and the excitement of insanity had quickened the slumbering memory of the hearer to recall, with such amazing distinctness, the faded and forgotten images of past impressions. "And this," exclaims the writer, "this, perchance, is the dread book of judgment, in whose mysterious language, every idle word is recorded! Yea, in the very nature of the living spirit, it may be more possible that heaven and earth should pass

away, than that a single act, a single thought, should be loosened or lost from that living chain of causes," which has formed the abiding character of the soul.*

Still, however solemn, and justly solemn as this view of death, and of the revelation of a future life is, it is possible to lay too great, or, at least, too exclusive a stress upon that event which is to unfold to us those revelations. Every future moment, not that of death only, nor that of the judgment which is immediately to follow — but every future moment of our being is to answer for every present moment. This is the great law of retribution. None less strict, or less severe, belongs to our moral nature. And it does not apply to the future life only, but equally to the present; and all the difference is, that it is now less clearly seen and felt. And it does not apply to any one epoch alone, but to all the periods, to all the moments of our endless being. It is not death, then, that we should fear, but the eternal retribution of conscience. It is not at the moment of death that we should tremble, but at every moment of the future that is to answer for the neglects, and errors, and offences of the mis-spent past. Virtue is deathless. It is more; it is blessed life. On the "path of the just that shineth brighter and brighter," no shadow abideth. The shade of death itself but opens the way to a brighter and more glorious existence. Nay, we must declare a stricter doctrine than this. Virtue alone is thus deathless. He who will not obey the great moral laws of his nature, he who lives in hostility to his conscience, and in estrangement from his God, can have nothing said to him to mitigate his fears of the mortal hour. He must fear it; he must, in reason, fear every future hour, and every future scene. If hell is dreadful to the sinful man, heaven would be more dreadful; if the company of evil beings can yield him no joy, the society of heavenly beings would fill him with despite and agony. Whither shall he flee? Where shall he go to escape fear or misery, whose present courses are raising up enemies in every future habit, feeling, and remembrance of his soul? Whither, did we say? Alas! it is not time or place only, it is not circumstance or situation, it is not the revealing light, or the overshadowing darkness; but it is himself that he has made an enemy and an avenger more dreadful than death!

Again; death is the separation of friends. And we are not of those who can speak lightly of this separation. We have heard of some who were able to lift up a radiant and almost a smiling countenance over the earthly remains of all that was dearest on earth; but it enters not into our conception to regard it as anything but extravagance and enthusiasm. We do not take upon us to set limits to the support which God may give to bereaved friendship or afflicted piety; but that triumph in the countenance, surely, is not their fit demeanour. No: the sundering stroke of death is stern, and cold, and bitter reality.

We have sometimes ventured to wonder, and that in the more fervent meditation upon God's goodness, why the trial is made so severe, and, for a time, so almost inconsolable. Could one glimpse, we have been ready to say, could one glimpse of the future world be opened to us, could the situation of the departed for one moment be made known to us; or might it have been the order of Providence that fami-

* Biographia Literaria, Chap. vi.

lies should be removed at once and together to the "spirit land"—but reflection and faith have soon arisen to check the remonstrances and questionings of anxious and yearning affection, and have soon shown, as they usually do, that God's providence is wiser than our own hasty presumption. Were families removed together, how certainly would our social affections gather up and concentrate themselves upon those narrow circles, and all the evils—the peculiarities, the prejudices, the selfish and exclusive attachments—of that limited intercourse, to which we are already sufficiently liable, would be inflicted on society; and all the benefits of a wide and generous diffusion and reciprocation of sentiments and feelings, would be cut off from the social body. If, again, the future world were opened to us, it might produce in us an utter distaste to this; it might disturb the well-balanced and wisely-ordered influences, under which we were made to act in the present state. If we could see, what we so ardently long to behold, beyond this veil of earthly shadows, we might have no eyes for the scene around us; we might be rapt in meditation, when we are called to the action and trial of all our virtues.

It was evidently designed that we should be trained up here, by a severe and lofty discipline, for some glorious state of being and enjoyment hereafter. The moral economy under which we are placed, the spiritual life on earth, was not designed to be vision, but faith: not rapture, but trial. The departure of friends and kindred to another world, irresistibly draws our thoughts thither, and constantly renders us more indifferent to acquisitions and objects here. Heaven claims our treasures, that our hearts may be there also. Faith, moreover, in the invisible, the spiritual, the eternal, is the appropriate faith of beings whose welfare lies in the invisible mind, whose nature is spiritual, and whose destiny, immortal. It is meet that we should be trained by the influences of a world which we see not, and from which no sound reaches us. It is our happiness, also, not only to love God, but to love him with the fervour and assurance of perfect trust. Love is ever doubtful without that trial; and it is but an impassioned feeling, without that quality of absolute confidence.

Yet a little while, therefore, are we required to wait, till we can behold those objects and those beings, on whom, next to God, it is right that our hearts should be set. The interval will not be too long for the trial of our faith, and the preparation of all our virtues; not too long to prepare us for the blessedness of a future life; nay, it may not be found too long to prepare us to die, as the Christian should die. To meet the last hour calmly, to resign all the objects which our senses have made familiar and dear, in the lofty expectation of better things for the mind, is itself a great act of faith, and one for which many days' reflection and experience may not be too much to prepare us. To take our last look at the countenances of beloved friends and companions; to close our eyes to the bright vision of nature; to bid adieu to earth, sky, waters; to feel, for the last time, the thrill of rapture with which this fair and glorious scene of things has so often touched the soul: this is an hour for faith unshaken in the immortality of virtue, and for trust unbounded in the love of God, and for the triumphant assurance which long tried and lofty experience alone can give. The feelings of the infidel Rousseau have seemed to us thus far natural, and such as even a

Christian may entertain. When he apprehended that his last hour drew near, he desired the windows of his apartment to be opened, that he might "have the pleasure," as he said, "of beholding Nature once more. How lovely she is!" he exclaimed; "how pure and serene is the day! O Nature! thou art grand indeed!"* Yet not as Rousseau died, does the Christian die; but with a better trust.

And with that trust, with a firm confidence in the perpetuity of all pious and virtuous friendships, there is much, surely, to mitigate the pain of a temporary separation. Let us remember, too, that we do submit to frequent separations in this life, that our friends wander from us over trackless waters, and to far-distant continents, and that we are still happy in the assurance that they live. And though, by the same providence of God that has guarded them here, they are called to pass beyond the visible precincts of this present existence, let us feel that they still live. God's universe is not explored when we have surveyed islands, and oceans, and the shores of earth's spreading continents. There are other regions where the footsteps of the happy and immortal are treading the paths of life. Would we call them back to these abodes of infirmity and sin? Would we involve them again in these toils, and pains, and temptations? Or shall we sorrow for them as those who have no hope? No; we would rather go and die with them. What do we say? We will rather go and live with them for ever!

But the awful entrance to the world of spirits — may still be our exclamation — how dark and desolate is that passage! It is a fearful thing to die. Nature abhors dissolution!

Let something of this be admitted, but let it not be too much. Does nature abhor dissolution? Behold the signs of decay and dissolution which winter spreads around us. Behold nature in her annual death— the precursor of renovated life. But we will not argue from emblems. We will admit that a living being must naturally dread to part with life. But he dreads to part with life only in a great measure as he dreads to part with everything that is his. He is averse to the loss of property, and in some instances, almost as much so, as to the loss of life itself. He is reluctant to part with any one of his senses; and this reluctance, compared with the natural dread of death, is in full proportion to the value of that organ. Let us rationally look at the subject in this light. Doubtless, we dread the loss of the sense of hearing, for instance; and when that is entirely gone from us, hearing is dead. We dread the loss of sight; and, that light extinguished, seeing is dead. Thus one faculty after another departs from us, and death is at work within us, while we say that we are in the midst of life. So let us regard it. So let us familiarize to our minds the thoughts of death, and feel that this dreaded enemy, dreaded, partly, because imagined to be so distant and unknown, has already made its lodgment in our frame, and, by familiar processes, is approaching the citadel of life. As disease is making its inroads upon us, and the system is wearing out, as the acuteness of sensation is failing us, and the vigour of bone and muscle is declining, let us say and feel, that we are gradually approaching the extinction of this animal life. Let no sceptic doubts, let no thoughts of annihilation mingle with our apprehensions of mortality; let us believe as Christians,

* Grimm's Correspondence.

that not the soul, but only the body dies, and death cannot be that dread and abhorrence of nature which we make it.

We fear that we have occasion to crave the patience of our readers for the length to which our discussion has run; but we would dwell upon this point a moment longer — the natural dread of death. It seems to us strange, it seems as if all were wrong, in a world where, from the very constitution of things, death must close every scene of human life, where it has reigned for ages over all generations, where the very air we breathe, and the dust we tread upon, was once animated life — it seems to us more strange and wrong, that this most common, necessary, expedient, and certain of all events, should bring such horror and desolation with it; that it should bring such tremendous agitation, as if it were some awful and unprecedented phenomenon; that it should be more than death—a shock, a catastrophe, a convulsion; as if nature, instead of holding on its steady course, were falling into irretrievable ruins.

And that which is strange, is our strangeness to this event. Call sickness, we repeat, call pain, an approach to death. Call the weariness and failure of the limbs and senses, call decay, a dying. It is so; it is a gradual loosening of the cords of life, and a breaking up of its reservoirs and resources. So shall they all, one and another, in succession, give way. "I feel" — will the thoughtful man say — "I feel the pang of suffering, as it were piercing and cutting asunder, one by one, the fine and invisible bonds that hold me to the earth. I feel the gushing current of life within me to be wearing away its own channels. I feel the sharpness of every keen emotion, and of every acute and far-penetrating thought, as if it were shortening the moments of the soul's connexion and conflict with the body." So it is, and so it shall be, till at last, "the silver cord is loosened, and the golden bowl is broken, and the pitcher is broken at the fountain, and the wheel is broken at the cistern, and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns unto God who gave it."

No; it is not a strange dispensation. Death is the fellow of all that is earthly; the friend of man alone. It is not an anomaly; it is not a monster in the creation. It is the law, and the lot of nature.

> "Not to thy eternal resting-place,
> Shalt thou retire alone. * * *
> Thou shalt lie down
> With patriarchs of the infant world, with kings,
> The powerful of the earth, the wise and good,
> Fair forms and hoary seers of ages past,
> All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills,
> Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun; the vales,
> Stretching in pensive quietness between;
> The venerable woods, rivers that move
> In majesty, and the complaining brooks,
> That make the meadows green, and poured round all,
> Old ocean's grey and melancholy waste —
> Are but the solemn decorations all,
> Of the great tomb of man."

But of what is it the tomb? Does the spirit die? Do the blessed affections of the soul go down into the dark and silent grave. Oh! no. "The narrow house, and pall, and breathless darkness," and funeral

train—these belong not to the soul. They proclaim only the body's dissolution. They but celebrate the vanishing away of the shadow of existence. Man does not die, though the forms of popular speech thus announce his exit. He does not die. We bury, not our friend, but only the form, the vehicle, in which, for a time, our friend lived. That cold, impassive clay is not the friend, the parent, the child, the companion, the cherished being. No, it is not; blessed be God, that we can say, *It is not!* It is the material world only that the earth claims. It is "dust" only, that "descends to dust." The grave! let us break its awful spell, its dread dominion. It is the place where man lays down his weakness, his infirmity, his diseases, and sorrows, that he may rise up to a new and glorious life. It is the place where man ceases—in all that is frail and decaying—ceases to be man, that he may be in glory and blessedness an angel of light.

Why, then, should we fear death, save as the wicked fear, and must fear it? Why dread to lay down this frail body in its resting-place, and this weary, aching head, on the pillow of its repose? Why tremble at this—that in the long sleep of the tomb, that body shall suffer disease no more, and pain no more, and hear no more the cries of want, nor the groans of distress—and, far retired from the turmoil of life, that violence and change shall pass lightly over it, and the elements shall beat, and the storms shall sigh unheard, around its lowly bed? Say, ye aged and infirm! is it the greatest of evils to die? Say, ye children of care and toil! say, ye afflicted and tempted! is it the greatest of evils to die?

Oh! no. Come the last hour in God's own time! and a good life and a glorious hope shall make it welcome. Come the hour of release! and affliction shall make it welcome. Come the hour of re-union with the loved and lost on earth! and the passionate yearnings of affection, and the strong aspiration of faith, shall bear us to their blessed land. Come death to this body: this burdened, tempted, frail, failing, dying body! and to the soul — thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory! —to the soul come freedom, light, and joy unceasing! come, the immortal life! "He that liveth"—saith the Conqueror over Death—"He that liveth and believeth in me, shall NEVER DIE!"

AMERICAN MORALS AND MANNERS.

We propose to offer some observations, in this essay, on American Morals and Manners. There is, at this moment, a very extraordinary crisis of opinion in Europe, with regard to this country. Our national character is not only brought into question, but it is brought into question as furnishing grounds for a decision upon the form of our government, upon the great cause of republican institutions.

For reasons, then, deeper than those which concern our national reputation, — and yet this is not indifferent, — this subject deserves attention. We have no desire to overrate the importance of this country; but it is undoubtedly the great embodiment of the leading principle on which the history of the world is to turn for many years to come. When, at some future time, a philosophical history of the present age shall be written, this country will occupy a place in it, the very converse of that which it now holds in the thoughts of most men in the Old World. That future time will far better understand the map of human affairs, not to say our literal geography, than does the present. It will be seen that the tree of freedom, planted on this Western continent, has shot its roots and fibres through the whole of Europe; beneath the soil of all her ancient and venerable institutions. Whether it shall stand, and flourish, and lend strength to the world; or whether, overturned by whelming floods, it shall draw the world down with it, or leave it rent and torn by the disruption of its ties—this is the question. We are not to be told that we are now speaking great words with little meaning. Those ties, we affirm, exist. The humbler classes in Europe may know definitely but little about us. But from out of this unknown world, from beyond the dim and spreading curtain of the sea, has come to them a story that they will never forget. They have heard first of a people who can eat the fruit of an unentailed soil, of their own soil; and we can testify from observation, that that word, *ownership*, is like a word of magic to them. They have heard, next, of a people who can read; to whom is unrolled the mysterious page of knowledge, the lettered wisdom of all mankind. Yes, and they are demanding and gaining that boon, that American privilege, from their own governments. They have heard, once more, of a people, who are their own governors, who make their own laws and execute them, and whom no man with impunity can wrong or oppress. Yes, in the lowliest cabins of Europe, they have learned all this. Let all the crowned powers of the world unteach it, if they can. This is no dream to them; it is a fact. There is example for it. And this one example is of more weight than all the books of theory that have been written from the time of Plato to this day.

The great controversy of the age, we have said in a former essay, is the controversy about freedom. To put it in a more exact and practical form, it is a question about government. How men shall govern themselves, or whether they can govern themselves at all, or, in other words, by what forms they are best governed,—this is the question. And it is a momentous question. A good-natured easiness, or philosophic indifference upon this point; the sage dictum — of Dr. Johnson, or of anybody else — that happiness is about the same under all governments, we cannot understand at all. We know that there are deeper things than government, affecting men's welfare; but we say this, nevertheless, affects it. Nay, and it has an influence, in many ways, upon those deeper things—sentiments, morals, modes of thought, views of life, the cheerfulness and hopefulness of life. If "oppression makes a wise man mad," it often makes a whole people worse than mad — unprincipled, immoral, and stupid or frivolous. If a single bad man in high station may corrupt many, what extended and blighting shadow over a country must be cast by the enthroned image of wrong! It dishonours and degrades, it vexes and demoralizes a people. Besides, government either helps or hinders individual development. It expands or contracts the whole man; for it touches his freedom, education, religion. It concerns not only the man's virtue, but the man's manhood: unless we were to say, as we might more justly, that virtue, rightly construed, is the manhood of man.

From these reasons, as well as from man's natural right to be free, has arisen the conviction in all liberal and generous minds, that the freest government, compatible with human safety, is to be preferred to all others.

Now of such a government, the *freest* in the world at least, America has given an example. The eyes of the world were directed to it. Could it succeed? If it could, it was virtually an answer to every argument for political wrong; for absolute monarchy, for primogeniture, for legitimacy in all its forms. Could it succeed? More than sixty years of success it has counted; no nation on earth has been in a happier condition, none more flourishing in affairs, more correct in morals, more submissive to law, or more loyal to its government. Sixty, nay, nearly seventy years have passed over a nation, experiencing, meanwhile, all the vicissitudes of peace and war, and of commercial prosperity and adversity, and still it has a being; it has not faded away, like a Utopian dream from these blessed shores; it is no mushroom empire; it stands firm and strong. And yet now, at this late hour, all at once, this experiment is distrusted and discredited throughout the whole of Europe.

It is certainly a very remarkable crisis in public opinion, and, on every account, demands attention. If this present distrust is a mere freak or whim of the public mind, that character should be fixed upon it. If it arises from misapprehension, the error should be promptly exposed. If there are any just grounds for it, most especially does it concern us in America to know it.

Let us, then, look carefully into the case of America, with reference to this distrust. What are the grounds of it? And how far are they sustained, if they are sustained at all, by the facts? What is there, in this American nation — a great nation; consisting of many millions of

people; prosperous, peaceful, happy; free, powerful, and respectable, we hope — what is there that justifies any alarmist, any croaker, in saying that the great experiment of this people in government is coming to nought, or that can warrant foreign writers, who should feel that they have a reputation to preserve, in speaking of this country in terms of gross indignity and ribald scorn?

The first charge that we shall examine, since at present it stands foremost of all, is that of the repudiation of public debts.

It is not easy to understand the feeling of all Europe on this point, without coming into actual contact with it. On a late visit to the Old World, we were amazed to observe the length to which this charge of repudiation is carried. Perpetually, without one single exception, among all the persons who addressed us, we were approached with an air and tone of sympathy for the sad case of America. The conversation usually ran in this manner: — "'A terrible thing this, in America!' 'What thing?' we said. 'Why, this repudiation, you know.' 'But who has repudiated?' 'Who? Why, the States, all the States, or the most of them; it is the doctrine now in America.' 'Nay, sir,' was our reply, 'let us understand this matter, if you please, before we proceed any farther. We say that the States have not repudiated their debts. We say that there is no such thing as repudiation in America, except in regard to limited portions of the debts of two of the States, where the just obligation to pay is denied. Michigan alleges, that, as certain monies which she proposed to borrow, never found their way into her treasury, she is not obliged, in good faith, to reimburse the lender. Mississippi contends, that she is not legally nor honestly bound to pay certain bonds, because they were sold and were bought in known violation of the very condition on which they were issued. We do not say that these are sufficient grounds of defence. We think that the acts of the authorized agents of a State should bind the State. But still we say, that neither of these is an act of open, unblushing repudiation. There is no such thing in America. We believe there never can be. It is a case, not of repudiation, but of simple bankruptcy. The States cannot pay at present; is that a crime?' 'But they can pay,' was the reply often made. 'They can lay a direct tax, for the purpose of paying the interest at least. Or, at any rate, they could come forward and relieve the public mind by saying that they acknowledge their liability, and mean, in due time, to meet it. They knew that suspicions were flung upon their good faith, and they have done nothing to remove them.' 'Consider,' we said in reply, 'how little the mass of the people are apt to feel themselves implicated in the acts of the government. They hear that there is a deficit in the treasury; they suppose that it will be supplied in some way, without ever suspecting that their honour is compromised, or that their intervention is necessary. Nor does it materially alter the case, that ours is a republican or representative government. It is a way of thinking that long since came into the world, with regard to the action of all governments. The public conscience does not feel itself responsible for the acts or neglects of government. We wish it did, among ourselves. We are willing to hear anything that tends to elevate the public conscience. And in this view, we could wish that either of the two things, before suggested, had been done; that is to say, either that

the voice of the people had demanded a direct tax, or a most open and formal profession of a purpose to pay. But the question now is, Does the failure to do one or the other of these things indicate a want of principle among the people, a willingness that the debt should never be paid? Would any other people have aroused themselves — the English or the French—to meet a case like this? Would they not have said, 'The government will provide; the thing will right itself in due time'? Would not the affair have been a parcel of the national budget, rather than a part of the national conscience?"

We think, indeed, that the governments of the delinquent States ought to have come forward in the late crisis, when their bonds were dishonoured in every market of the world, and to have said, "We hold the public faith and honour to be sacred, and we firmly believe, and fully intend, that these debts shall be paid." This, the suffering bondholders had a right to demand, at the least; and they did demand it. They said, and they still say, "You cannot pay: be it so; you say that you cannot lay a direct tax to pay the interest on these bonds; that it is a time of universal and unparalleled distress in your country; that the people of the delinquent States have land, have wheat, have everything, but money: be it so; but yet *say* something to us; say that you mean to pay; that will satisfy us for the present; that will relieve the panic which is sweeping down us and our families by hundreds, to poverty and misery." Why did not the State authorities in question meet this call? Why do they not meet it now? We ask this question with unspeakable concern and pain. We can conceive of no answer to it that ought to satisfy anybody. It must be want of care, of courage, or of principle. That it should be want of principle; that our public functionaries are willing violaters of their plighted faith, sworn oath-breakers, — we choose to consider, and we do consider, impossible. A carelessness, we conceive — a feeling of not being responsible, too apt to be the feeling of public men, in distinction from that of private men, and increased here by constant rotation in office — the feeling, in short, which says, "*I* did not borrow this money, and I am no more responsible in regard to it than every man around me;" all this may be the explanation, in part, of this great neglect, as it seems to us, of public duty. It is very well known, that, in England, as well as in America, successive administrations do not feel responsible for the acts of the last, as if they were their own. It is very easy to see, that if our States had, each of them, a permanent head—a prince or king—the sense of responsibility, in such a crisis, would be far more binding.

Still we must confess, that this reasoning, though it may explain something, is, in such a case, by no means satisfactory. But is this enough even to explain the case? Must there be something more? Can it be that our State authorities have distrusted the honesty of the people; have doubted, whether, in the simple admission that the debt is binding, they would be supported by public sentiment; have feared, that if they spoke the honest word, they should lose their dishonest places? Then, before Heaven do we say it, we believe that they do not *know* the people whom they canvass! It is not true, that the people of this country, if the honest part were truly placed before them, would reject it. It cannot, it shall not, it must not, be true. In strict faith and conscience, we believe it is not. If we thought it were, if we ever

were brought to that terrible conclusion, if we believed this nation to be a false and dishonest nation, we should fold our arms in despair; we should lift our eyes to heaven and say, "God! give us another country! We have no country; give us some far land, some distant shore, where faith is kept, and truth abides; for we have no more a country!" We trust we shall be believed, when we say, that this is no language of rhetoric. It has been lately said in a printed letter, that "Indiana *will certainly* repudiate." We do not believe it. But if it were true, hopelessly true, and if we were a citizen of Indiana, we would leave that State without delay. We would not breathe its air one moment beyond the time that we had power to leave it.

We can believe that this is a subject on which the public conscience is not yet sufficiently aroused, without losing our confidence in the people. We can believe that the public mind is, to some degree, sophisticated on this subject. There have been some novel speculations spread among the people, designed to show that governments have no right to contract debts; that the present generation has no right to bind the future; and much has been made in Europe of the circumstance, that one of the public functionaries of the State of New York has lent his countenance to such a doctrine; a doctrine, which, whether true or false, becomes, at any rate, dishonest, the moment it is made to apply to debts already contracted. There is a feeling, too, among the people that these debts have been rashly contracted; that the public works on which these loans have been expended, are of little or no service to them; that millions have been thrown away upon useless canals, and that it is hard they should now be heavily taxed for these bootless enterprises. Add to this, the general feeling of irresponsibleness for what the government does; and it is easy to see in what a different light this case may present itself, from that of direct personal liability.

It is not strange, perhaps, that the creditor in Europe does not, or will not, see this difference. He addresses the State that is indebted to him — Pennsylvania, for instance — just as if it were a private individual.* He says, "You can pay; you are rich at this moment; you can pay; you will not pay; you are revelling in 'the luxury of dishonesty;' you never will pay." He feels disposed, if he meets a Pennsylvanian at dinner in London, to seize upon him, strip him, and, in a sort of symbolical retaliation, to divide his apparel among the guests; his coat to one, his boots to another, and his watch to a third. If anybody wants the benefit of this lash, let them have it. If this irony can do any good, let it, in Heaven's name! But still, we must say, that it is more amusing than reasonable. Suppose the Affghan people should retort in this way upon the Reverend satirist—could they catch him — because his *Government* had done them some harm. Suppose the Chinese should smother him in a chest of opium, because his people persisted in smuggling the article into their country. Nay, and we cannot quite admire the taste with which these English writers come forth to teach and reprimand this country — something as if they had birch in hand for this great republican boy on the other side of the water. But to be serious; is all this wise or just? Multitudes in Pennsylvania, and in all the indebted States, are most anxious that this

* See the Letters of the Rev. Sydney Smith.

matter should be fairly adjusted. But they find that this cannot be done in a moment. A whole people must be aroused to the payment of a government debt. Such a thing was never done before in the world; and we doubt whether it can be done anywhere else. We doubt whether the public debt of England would stand the tide of universal suffrage a single day. Be that as it may; here is a Pennsylvanian — let us suppose — labouring, and hoping, and believing that all may be brought right. In the meantime, would the Reverend accuser have him him eaten up at a dinner in London? We cannot sympathize with his wit. With us it is a matter too great and grave to raise a laugh about. We are sorry for his anger, too; for it has certainly cost him sixty per cent. on his investment. He says he has sold his stock at forty per cent. He says it, as if he had washed his hands of it. "Haste makes waste." If he had waited a little, he might have had a hundred.

At the same time, we freely say, that to any, not petulant, but calm and solemn remonstrance of this gentleman, whose talent we admire, whose writings we delight in, we would give all the aid in our humble power. We do not regret that he should use his powerful pen to awaken the public conscience in this country. We would that many pens should be employed in this cause. Yes, and with all our heart let them point to that magnificent State of Pennsylvania, — key-state she is called—key-state she is; and never did more depend on her than now! There is a voice from her western border which has thrilled through the hearts of thousands—the noble manifesto of the Pittsburg "Franklin Association." Honour and success to it. Let the capital answer to that voice! Let the river echo to the mountains that great motto — "Franklin and Honesty!" We would, indeed, there were public meetings called in all our cities to consider this solemn crisis in our national morals, to pour out eloquent indignation upon the bare thought of public delinquency; to do all that is possible to wipe off the dishonour that is cast upon us in the face of all Europe!

There is, in fact, an effort to be made in this country, of which we think our people are not yet fully aware. This matter of our public indebtedness must not be left to take care of itself. The country must be aroused. It must come to be distinctly understood, that here is no ordinary work to be done. A whole people must be brought to feel the obligation of a public engagement. We have assigned some reasons to show why this does not come home to the private and individual conscience. But it must be brought home there. Our only help lies in individual conviction. Every merchant, every mechanic, every farmer, must be made to feel that this obligation presses like a private debt upon his warehouse, his workshop, his land. The truth is, a new kind of national conscience is to be called into being here. The people of these states, paying immense debts, which press upon them in the form of government loans, paying them by a voluntary effort, as they will do, will present a moral spectacle never before seen in the world. The principle that will do this, lies, we firmly believe, in the heart of these communities; but it is to be quickened into life, and roused into action. And this *must* be done. We must not admit nor consent that anything else is possible. Shall the blight of bad faith be upon our fields, and streams, and mountains, as an everlasting curse and shame? Shall this

canker be suffered to remain in the very root of all our prosperity and hope? Shall this terrible precedent stand in the national history of millions of free, prosperous, and intelligent people? Shall this be the heritage of dishonour that is to go down from us to our posterity? And shall the nations, as they pass by our borders, say, "Aha! these are the people that talked of liberty, and justice, and human rights; but they never paid their debts"? Heaven forbid! We neither admit, nor consent, nor believe, that this is possible.

The second charge brought against us, is that of an excessive and demoralizing love and pursuit of gain.

To meet the full extent of the distrust that is felt of this country and of its institutions on pecuniary grounds, it is necessary to take a larger view than that of temporary repudiation. There are other accusations connected with this larger view. It is said that the entire national mind of this country is corrupted by the pursuit of wealth; that in the absence of hereditary distinctions, this is the main title to consideration among us, and that to gain it, has become the one passion of our people; that from this cause has come in a flood of bankruptcies, failures, frauds; that we have become the most dishonest people in the world; and, in fine, that our great political experiment is wrecked upon a rock of gold; — or, rather, of what we thought was gold, but which has turned out to be no better than worthless slate.

Let us observe, in passing, that the failure of the United States Bank, being, as it was strictly after the withdrawal of the national charter, a private corporation, no more involves the moral credit of our people, than the failure of a bank at Leeds or Manchester does that of the English people. But let us proceed to the general allegation.

That, as a people at large, we are a money-seeking people beyond all others, we do not deny. That the pursuit of property carries us too far, and is the cause of many mistakes and evils among us, we do not deny. But with regard to the opprobrium attached to this national trait, we must ask for some candid reflection.

It must be remembered, then, that there never was a people to whom the paths of acquisition were so widely opened as the people of this country. In Europe, entail on the land and capital in the manufactories, hold the mass of property from general possession. The labouring classes, generally, are tenants at will, or toilers for a bare subsistence. To have a competence, an independence, however humble, is a thing entirely beyond their reach and thought. In this country, this boon, or the hope of it at least, is held out to all. Can it be expected, that any people will be indifferent to such a blessing? We are not surprised that the first development of the unobstructed free principle is the eager pursuit of property. Noble ones are to follow, are following already; but it was natural, it was inevitable, that this should be the first. A man were a fool, and not a rational being, if, when the chance is offered him of providing for his own declining days, or for the future wants of his family, he should fold his hands in transcendental wisdom, or plebeian stupidity, and say that he did not care for property.

Nor do we admit all that is charged, of bad consequences, from the pursuit of worldly goods. We will come in a moment, to our late commercial disasters. But first, we deny in general, that the common possession of this great heritage of opportunity, has had the effect alleged,

to vulgarize, degrade, and corrupt the public mind. This wide diffusion of property tends to make a generous people. We certainly are not a hoarding people. Our expenditures are free enough in all conscience, we need not say; but we must say, since we are put upon this ungrateful argument, that our charities, too, are free. And we wish that our British accusers, in particular, would think now and then, amidst their reproaches, of the thousands and ten thousands of their own poor, whom we annually relieve. They come in shoals every week, every day, to our shores; sometimes, we are told, actually shipped off from the alms-houses of England in utter helplessness, by the public authorities; they crowd our own alms-houses; they besiege our doors in all the cities of our sea-board; and we verily believe, that, in the long run, we are to give to the poor of Great Britain more than the amount of all the debts we owe her! We *can* do it; and a good many things more; and pay the debt besides; and *shall* — such is our assured faith.

But again; we doubt whether the eagerness for gain, though circumstances have made it more general here, is, by any means, so intense as it is in the higher circles of Europe. There is nothing here to compare with the rigid grasp of entail; with the inhumanity, the unnatural cruelty and injustice, that looks around upon a circle of children, alike loving and entitled to love, and says, "Penniless shall ye all be, but this, my eldest; dependent shall ye all be upon him; in order that our family may be great." They say that we have no birth-distinctions here to honour. But how long will the birth-distinction last without the wealth-distinction? The law of primogeniture answers, No, no; the great name must be graven on a plate of gold, or it will wear out. The possessors of rank will not be the men to set a light value upon the wealth that sustains it.

This close alliance, too, must give wealth, with the *mass of the people*, increased influence and power. And we verily believe, strange as the assertion may be thought, that opulence is a surer title to respect in Europe, than it is in America. Besides its association with rank, it is a rarer thing there than it is here. And from both causes, it can surround itself with homages there, which here it would seek for in vain. We are *certain*, that the *poor* man in America stands a better chance of receiving the consideration and respect that are due to him, than in Europe. The Old World is full of arrangements that visibly assign to him an humbler place and accommodation. The forward deck of steamboats is for him; the second class of railroad cars; the humble *fiacre* or *citadine* in the cities; nay, the very streets tell the same tale. Till recently, in the cities of Europe, the streets had no side-walks. But fifteen years ago, large quarters in Paris did not possess one side-walk. And the language of all this was as plain as if the words had been formed in the very paving-stones; "these streets were built solely for the convenience of the rich who ride in carriages, and not for the poor who walk." Yes, and the rapid increase of side-walks in the cities as plainly proclaims the onward march of more just and liberal principles. The barricades in Paris did not tell a plainer tale.

But let us come to the season of our late commercial disasters. This, in the view of many foreign observers, has plunged the moral and political hope of the country into utter ruin. Let us look at the case. In a thriving country, of vast and unexplored resources, amidst an en-

terprising population, to whose whole mass were opened the courses of boundless competition, there grew up gradually, from various causes, an honest conviction of the increased value of all property. We were living in a new age, in a new world, amidst new and untried fortunes; prosperity, such as the world, perhaps, had never known, was pouring its treasures into the lap of peace; human intelligence, aspiration, hope, were lifting their wings for an unbounded flight; mechanism, more than realizing the fabled stories of giants and Titans, seemed about to break through the iron barriers of necessity, and to open the regions of some fairer and happier state of being. There were distinct causes, no doubt, of the wild speculations of 1835 and 1836, but we believe that the excited spirit of the age lent them a powerful impulse. At any rate, the impulse became general, became universal. We well remember how sage and cautious men held out against it for a time. We remember, too, how one after another fell in with it; till at length all yielded to the tide of opinion, and were gazing unconcerned, if not actually swimming upon this vast and tremendous Maelstrom. Speculation became, in fact, a part of the regular and accredited business of the country. It was not like the mania about the South Sea and Mississippi stocks; it was not the scheme of a few; it did not wear an air of romance or frenzy, which might well have put the prudent upon their guard; it was the trade and traffic of the many. People honestly said, "We had not appreciated the value of our property; our houses, our lots, and lands are, and are to be, worth more than we had thought; how much we know not." Suppose, then, multitudes to have become honestly possessed with the conviction, that they could make immense fortunes in a few years; and see the unprecedented force of the temptation. The fact is, that no community on earth was ever subjected to anything like the same trial. Is it strange that many sunk under it; that the sound old maxims of prudence were considered as superseded and to be laid aside; that men took risks first, then involved themselves in embarrassments; and that many, at last, fell into positive frauds? There have been sad failures on every side; not received with dishonest nonchalance, as our foreign traducers represent; they little know the honourable minds to which they do this wrong. And there have been gigantic frauds, which have struck the heart of the whole community with salutary horror. All this we admit. But when we hear it said, "The great republican experiment has failed;" we answer, No; some banks, some houses, some individuals have failed, but the country has not failed; the experiment has not failed; the heart of the people is sound. In fact, when we speak of the whole community as engaged in the late hazardous courses of business, we speak, after all, only of the trading classes; the people at large knew nothing about it. The body of farmers and mechanics was absolutely untouched by it. And we aver and we know, concerning our people at large, and that, too, from some minute knowledge and extensive comparison, that there is not a more honest and virtuous people on earth. We might say more; for there is nothing among our people to compare with the small, paltry, perpetual deception, knavery, and lying, that one finds everywhere on the continent of Europe. We might say more, then; but thus much at least will we say; for while, on the one hand, we have no taste for flattery, on the other, we will not give up our people to unjust reproach. Conceit may be bad, but dis-

couragement is scarcely less so; to submit passively to opprobrium, is to go half-way towards deserving it; and at any rate, what we desire in the case is absolute truth and justice — no more and no less.

The third grave charge against American Morals is fixed upon the system of Slavery.

Let the charge be precisely stated. It is not that we now import slaves, or suffer them to be imported. We have declared the trade to be piracy; and were the first nation in the world to do so. The charge is, that a body of the unfortunate African race formerly introduced into this country, and which has come by inheritance into the hands of the present generation, is still held in bondage. It is an involuntary possession. It was not sought by those in whom the title now vests; it is not desired by the most of them; it was entailed upon them. And the substantive matter of the accusation is, that they do not emancipate this class immediately. Gradual emancipation has been going on in this country from the moment that it was freed from its connexion with Great Britain. Up to the time of the Abolition excitement, the discussion of such relief was freely entertained from one end of the country to the other. Let the reader remember the debates in the Virginian Legislature, after the Southampton massacre, the language of Jefferson himself on this subject, and the conversations he must have held with the Southern planters, if he has taken any pains to converse with them. The charge is not, that the body of our citizens, even in the Slave-States, approve of this system in the abstract; not that they would now establish it; but that they permit its existence at all, that they do not break it up immediately; or with regard to the Northern States, it is that they are slumbering in criminal apathy over this tremendous evil and wrong. In one word, the charge is, that the national conscience is far behind that of other civilized countries. For it is not our present business to maintain that we are better than other nations, but to show that no grand demoralization has taken place under our Republican forms. This is what is now alleged in Europe, and this is what we deny.

We had prepared ourselves to make a somewhat full statement of our views of the entire Slavery question; but we refrain from doing so at present, for two reasons. The first is, that it would swell this essay beyond due bounds. And the second is, that we are unwilling, on reflection, to discuss the subject at large from the particular point of view at which we now stand. It places us in a false position with reference to our own sentiments. From some experience, we have found that everything we say, with a view to the defence of the national morality on this subject, is seen in a false light. We are looked upon as apologists for Slavery,—a thing we can never permit.

We must content ourselves at present, therefore, with some remarks on the state of feeling existing in this country, and the judgment formed of it abroad. Are we then to say, in the first place, that this feeling is altogether right, that the public conscience is elevated or quickened to the desirable point? It would be idle, and foolish, and immoral, to say it. We suppose the people of this country, and especially the parties interested, feel very much as the people of England or France would, as all people will at first, in a case where immense interests are involved, where old habitudes and prejudices are called in

question, and where selfish passions are aroused by earnest discussion. And here we must still desire the reader to observe our point of view, and not to misconstrue us. Absolutely speaking, we can have no wish but to raise the public character and conscience among us, to the highest elevation possible. In this view, it is nothing to us that other nations fail; we will spread no such shield over our errors. But when it is said, that our free institutions have depraved the national character, have made us a selfish and reckless people, have made us worse than any other people, it is to the purpose, and it is but justice to the great liberal cause, to deny the charge. We are willing that other nations should exact of us more than they demand of themselves, if they please; but when the exaction is brought into this kind of argument, we think it is unfair. We freely say, that we are not satisfied with the feeling that exists in this country with regard to the stupendous immorality of the slave-system, but we must equally deny that it indicates any extraordinary degeneracy.

But, in the next place, what is the feeling in fact? The Northern States have always been opposed to Slavery; they have manumitted all their slaves long ago; they are overspread with Abolition Societies at this moment; and the writings of Channing and others have drawn universal attention, and stirred the universal conscience. Does all this look like apathy? But then it is said, that many people at the North have been exasperated by the Abolition movement. But we ask, could this be, because they are opposed to abolition? Why, they have abolished Slavery themselves? The truth is, they thought this movement dangerous to the peace of the country, to the union of the States. And then they did not like the manner and tone of the Abolitionists. They could not help their dislike, perhaps; but they ought, we think, to have been more considerate than they were. They ought to have respected the pure and gentle, the courageous and self-sacrificing spirit of a man like Follen, and of others like him; and we believe they did. But at any rate, their dislike of the Abolitionists was not a hostility to abolition. The hopeful idea has always been entertained in New England, that the emancipation, of which itself had set the example, would gradually spread itself over the South, till not one human creature in these States should be held in bondage. Then again, with regard to the feeling entertained at the South, we must believe that much injustice has been done to it. There are those, it is true, who defend the slave-system in its very principle, and maintain that it ought to be permanent. But we believe they are few. Many of the planters, we know, feel their situation to be a painful and irksome one, and would gladly be rid of it. But what should they have done? They saw, as they aver, that manumission, with them, did the coloured man no good; that he was a worse man, and worse off, for his freedom. They felt, too, that their characters were assailed with rude and cruel severity, and they were naturally indignant. This was set down, at once, to Southern pride, and selfishness, and inhumanity; but was it just? We have known the Southern people, as generous, and hospitable, and kind-hearted, and courteous, to a proverb; no people in the world more so; was it right to heap upon them unmeasured opprobrium and indignity, instead of approaching them as brethren, with kind and respectful reasoning; instead of mildly asking them what ought to be, and what could be done?

And, indeed, what is to be done? This, we say, in the third place, is the great question; and it is a difficult question; it is environed with difficulties. The way out of these difficulties is not so plain, that a good conscience must needs see it at once, and feel no hesitation. The example of West India Emancipation has, indeed, relieved some doubts. The docility, the gratitude, the joy of the coloured people there, and their willingness quietly to enter into new social relations, to work as freemen upon the fields which they had tilled as slaves, presented a beautiful and touching spectacle; and we rejoice at it; we thank God for it. But yet, is West India Emancipation an example for us? The coloured race, with us, must ever be a small and depressed minority. They can never be the dominant class, as in the West Indies. Scattered among us, and yet separated from us by impassable, physical, if not mental barriers; refused intermarriage, refused intercourse as equals, be it ever so unjustly; how are they ever to rise? How are they to enjoy any fair chance as men? We are disposed to ask for them an ampler measure of relief than mere emancipation. And yet, how they are to get it, except in entire removal from the country, we see not. Force, for this purpose, is out of the question; but we have thought that, if, being emancipated, they should see it to be for their advantage, to retire to Hayti or the West Indies, it would be fortunate for them; it would be the only situation in which they could rise to their proper place as men. And we have doubted whether emancipation in this country, either at the North or South, has done them any good. The instances that have fallen under our particular and personal observation, go to prove the contrary. We have known communities of them, where fifty years of freedom have left them worse and worse off for it. We do not say that they were less happy; for we think that freedom is a boon that may compensate for the loss of almost everything beside. At the same time, we hear that there are far more favourable instances than those we have examined. We are told, that in the cities of New York and Philadelphia, there are communities of regular, orderly, and industrious coloured people, who have their churches, their schools, their charitable institutions, and among whom are far fewer poor and wretched than among the Irish emigrants. They are said to have improved very much within the last ten years. Something of this we have suspected; and it has occurred to us that the demonstration of friendship given in the visible array of the Abolition movement, may have been of great service to them.

The question before us, we say, is one of momentous concern, and fraught with difficulty and danger. It were a comparatively easy thing to vote twenty millions, or a hundred millions, to free slaves in a distant land. And we verily believe, that our difficulties would be less, if *all* the States were Slave-States. Then we should have one common interest. Then we might go together. Now there is a perilous altercation between the North and the South. To our apprehension, it endangers the Union. Foreigners can feel little concern about it, compared with what we feel: and they may use a rough and violent language on this subject, which it would not be our wisdom to imitate.

On the whole, we think it must be apparent that this is a subject to be treated with the utmost care and consideration, with the utmost Christian seriousness and moderation. We are accused abroad of a

base and criminal apathy upon it. Who of us may deserve this charge we know not, but we do know many who have stood aloof from the Abolition movement, in application to whom it would be utterly and cruelly false. From our youth up, we have known the fact to be far otherwise. Twenty-five years ago — long before any Abolition Society was heard of—we knew of a private Association of gentlemen formed for the investigation of this subject.* Often and often have we known this matter to be discussed, as the most fatal evil and peril of the country; discussed at the North with solemn deliberation, and at the South with anxieties and tears even, which should have won a consideration far different from this coarse and ferocious abuse.

It has been proclaimed abroad that our pulpit dares not speak out on this subject; that many of our clergy are Abolitionists, but have not the courage to confess it. We repel the charge with indignation. Our clergy generally, though, of course, opposed to Slavery, are *not* Abolitionists. Nay, and we have discussed the subject of Slavery less frequently than we otherwise might have done, because we saw, or thought we saw, that the discussion was taking a dangerous turn. Foreigners can strike in freely among us; the blow does not hurt them; they care little for our dissensions and our perils; but *we*, with their leave, must look a little more carefully after these matters. It is always found that one's neighbours can speak much more freely of his family than he can himself. They understand but little of the difficulty and delicacy of his situation. We say plainly that we do not like the tone of *English* criticism upon us.† We have seen more than one rough and reckless comment upon our soberest writers on politics, like Channing and Story. They are considered as timid and time-serving. We recollect that in one of the leading Reviews, Channing was represented — the kind-hearted and intrepid Channing — as "bowing and kissing hands to the public all round!" Nay, even on the subject of Slavery, he was too prudent for some. The celebrated John Foster said, when reading one of his powerful Essays, "It is very fine, but rather too much like a razor." *He* wanted that the American champion should strike with a club. The fact is, people abroad look with a sort of speculative and curious feeling upon our discussions. They like to see the Democratic principle, as they consider it, carried out to the fullest extent, as it is in the former writings of Brownson, and of others, young and rash as he was. That pleases them, amuses them. But we have something else to do in this country, besides pleasing or amusing anybody. We must be sober, if we would be wise men. We have many things to consider, that are out of the reach of transatlantic

* The writer of this essay was a member of this Association.

† We do not descend so low in this allusion as to a late article, run mad with the rage for abuse, in the last London *Foreign Quarterly Review*. Nor do we refer now to its criticism on our poets. But the first few pages contain an attack upon this country, of such unmeasured injustice, that we can find no words wherewith adequately to speak of it. We are sometimes tempted to ask, *is* there something coarse and brutal in the English civilization? But we check ourselves. We have seen the homes of England, and never and nowhere on earth do we expect to find more refinement, courtesy, and hospitality, than we have seen there. And we trust the higher mind of that country to rebuke, as they deserve, such insane ebullitions, when occupying any loftier place than the vilest newspaper, or the lowest gin-shop.

eyes. We have many interests to take into the account, many powers and tendencies to hold in a careful balance. God forbid that we should set anything above the sovereign, solemn, eternal truth! But beneath that truth we must walk reverently, soberly, humbly.

We have now considered the three heaviest charges that are brought against our national morality; repudiation, the spirit of gain, and slavery. We might proceed to say something, if we had space, of certain disorders, private broils, and violations of law, under the name of Lynch-law, which characterize the state of society in the far West. There is a certain border-land between civilization and barbarism, where personal vindication, and lawless defence of society against thieves and gamblers, sometimes take place of the regular administration of public justice. We have no defence whatever to make for these usages. We have only to say, that they are less remarkable and portentous than they appear to European eyes; especially when it is considered that these are continually exhibited in newspaper paragraphs, instead of the general order of society which prevails in that part of the country. But the important observation to be made is, that this border-land is constantly retreating before the advances of settled law and order. If it were otherwise, if this border were coming eastward, if Lynch Law and the bowie knife were gaining upon us, it were an invasion to be looked upon with unmitigated horror. But the truth is, that they are constantly driven back, and are fast retreating to "their own place," the wild domain of savage life.

After all, we are not sure but the great offence of this country lies in what is called "a Democratic levelling of all distinctions," and in what is represented as "a consequent general vulgarity of mind and manners." Strangely enough, Mr. Dickens has especially taken it to heart, to make this impression upon the people of England, and upon his readers all over Europe. We do not say that he was obliged to think well of us, because we thought well of him, and received him kindly. He had delighted the people of this country with his pictures of life and manners; he had provided them with what, amidst their too serious and engrossing cares, they very much wanted — a great deal of harmless amusement; he had won them by the broad and beautiful seal of humanity that is set upon his genius; and they paid him a homage which no people on earth could pay. It was really a most extraordinary demonstration, creditable to both parties, indicative of great intellectual power on the one side, and of no mean share of intelligence on the other: and out of this bare fact of Mr. Dickens's reception, doing him more justice than he does himself, we could frame an argument good against more than half he says of America. We confess, under all the circumstances of the case, that we were never more at a loss to account for any state of mind, than for this bitterness towards America, of the popular novelist. It will not do for him to say, that he is a fiction writer, and somewhat of a caricaturist. When he draws pictures of disgusting meanness and vulgarity at home, he lets the reader plainly understand that they belong to the lowest life in England. But he presents to the English and European public, pictures of a vulgarity which nobody ever saw, or heard, or conceived of in America, and when they walk out of the frame, lo! they are merchants of New York, Generals and landed proprietors in the West, persons holding respec-

table positions in society. This is no play of fiction. Speaking in his own person, he permits himself, amidst a strain of almost insane vituperation, to use language like this concerning America: — "That Republic," he says, "but yesterday let loose upon her noble course, and but to-day so maimed and lame, so full of sores and ulcers, foul to the eye, and almost hopeless (?) to the sense, that her best friends turn from the loathsome creature with disgust!!" We grieve to say, that the disgust inspired by this passage, must turn, we fear, upon the writer of it. Mr. Dickens might be reminded, that there are other vehicles for scurrility, as it would seem, besides newspapers. We challenge him to find in the lowest of our public prints, any language concerning any civilized people on earth, to compare with the passage we have just quoted. Can it be a respectable thing in England, to treat a nation with such indignity as this? We believe not. The angry novelist, as we have reason to know, is doing himself more hurt at home, even than abroad.

But there is, nevertheless, a state of opinion in England to which this general representation addresses itself. It is doubtless believed by many, that the people in this country are, in the mass, a knavish, mean, and vulgar people; that we are a people of infinite pretension, and very little performance; that our intelligence is cunning, our virtue wordy talk, and our religion fanaticism; in short, that our Democratic institutions are fast breaking down all reverence, nobleness, and true culture among our people. From the high places of society in England, they cast down scorn upon this poor Republic, wallowing in the mire and filth of boundless license and vulgarity! *

We are somewhat tempted to take that bull, John Bull, by the horns in this matter, though we should be gored by him. Nobility against Democracy then—be it so. We are ready to maintain that Democracy is yielding nobler results. We will not direct attention to the misery of the lower classes in that country; but we point directly to the higher classes. We say that much of that misery is owing to them. We say that they do not now, and that they never did, their duty to the people of England. We say that they have never made any contribution, proportionable to their advantages, to the wealth, improvement, learning, literature, or even to the statesmanship of England. Were not their ranks continually recruited from the commonalty, they would have more than half died and ceased out of the land by this time. Their position is essentially a false and wrong position for human beings to occupy. Nay, their feeble hands cannot hold the very property that is committed to them. Were it not lashed on to them by entail, it would be scattered during the life-time of the present generation. At this very moment, more than half of the great landed estates of England are under mortgage.

We say, moreover, that their position is one totally unjust, and infinitely ungenerous to the rest of the people. They have a most unfair start in the race of life. There is no generous boy in any country that would not disdain such an advantage. Suppose that such a boy were sent to any public school; and that the master, patting him on the head, should say to him, "I know where you came from, my dear;

* See Lord Sydenham's Letter.

you are the son of such or such an one; now do not trouble yourself about the tasks, my boy; though you do not work half so hard as the others, you shall have more marks than any of them; and when you run races with them, you shall always have two rods the start; so you shall be a grand boy in the school any way." Now, what would any spirited and generous boy say of this? With bursting tears of indignation, we should expect him to say, "I do not want to be treated so; I do not want any advantage; let me take my chance with the rest." The peerage is the great baby-nursery of England; and all the land is taxed and tasked to keep it warm and comfortable — especially for the oldest boy; and when the younger ones run out, instantly coats and cloaks—to wit, army and navy uniforms, cassocks, good secretaryships, appointments—are provided for them by the kind and nursing public.

The good people of England, especially, admire this institution, and it is our especial marvel that they do. We cannot help thinking, that many a noble lord laughs in his sleeve at it. Our own feeling is, that the people in that country are not elevated, but degraded by this worship of the aristocracy. We remember once asking in a company of intelligent and cultivated persons in England, whether there was anybody, any man in the country, who, on being invited by the lord of a neighbouring castle to visit him and spend a week in hunting with his lordship, would not feel — and that, too, whether his lordship was wise or simple, bad or good—would not feel, we say, sensibly gratified, and very highly honoured. With a shout of laughter at our simplicity, they all answered, "No, there is no such man in England!"

Give us, then, we say, the chance for the noblest development of all human faculties and affections, that is found in our generous freedom, with all its faults, rather than that which is offered in the title-worshipping land of Britain!

In connexion with our morality, we wish to say a word or two, in passing, of our religion. There is a total misconception in Europe, on this subject. We have no established Church, and no ecclesiastical revenue, and it is inferred that we have no religion. Dr. Chalmers, some years ago, came out in London with a series of lectures on the Voluntary System, and much did he delight the members of the establishment by proving, as they supposed, that religion cannot be left to take care of itself; that it is not in this, as in worldly matters, that demand will procure supply. We should like to know what he thinks of it now, since one of the noblest voluntary contributions has been made, that ever the world saw, to support him and the free churches of his new communion, in breaking off from the Establishment. Be this as it may; here in America is a perfect illustration of the permanent working of the voluntary principle. Here is a country without either establishment, or endowment, or revenue, or compulsion of any sort, to support religion. And what do we see? More Divinity Schools are established here, more churches are builded; and larger salaries, to *the body* of the clergy, are paid in this country, than anywhere else in the world. Demand will not procure supply — the voluntary principle will not sustain religious institutions — is it said? Look at the churches that are rising around us in every city in the Union—and not one stone laid in their foundation, but what the voluntary principle lays there.

But this zeal is not confined to our cities. We took a journey three or four years since, across the hills of our own and a neighbouring county in Massachusetts, and we must confess that we were equally surprised and delighted with what we saw. In the first township that we came to, they were building a new church, for the convenience of a half parish two or three miles from the old church. In the second, they were painting their church, and had replaced the old steeple with a new one. We shall be permitted to be thus minute, because these are the simple facts. In a third township — all lying adjacent to each other — they had pulled down the old church, and built a new, commodious, and tasteful structure in its stead. In a fourth, not far distant, we came out upon what seemed a church in the wilderness; all surrounded by woods, with not a dwelling-house in sight. One other building there was, indeed, hard by it, and that was a new academy—with a bell that was ringing out its matin call to the pupils, and sounded like a convent bell amidst the solitudes of the Alps. Now, let a man travel over England, and where can he find anything like this? Dr. Chalmers asks for a power that shall build churches, and support their ministers. We point him to the voluntary principle. It does build churches here, and it does pay the clergy; and it does everything else that we want done. At least it accomplishes more than is done in any other country. England, with all her ecclesiastical revenues, and all the power of her hierarchy, and all the wealth of her nobles, cannot build churches, nor raise funds in her waste places, nay, nor in her thronged cities, to any such extent as is done here, simply by the voluntary principle.

Passing from our morals and religion, we would say something, in the next place, of our manners. And we freely admit the high significance of this consideration. Manners really are, according to the old usages of language, matters of morality. Manners are the instant unfolding, outflowing of a people's mind; they are unpremeditated expressions of culture or coarseness, refinement or vulgarity, self-considering or self-forgetting, justice or injustice, kindness or coldness of heart; they are as significant as charities or churches, as bankruptcies or battles. Show us a people whose manners are essentially bad — gross, coarse, ungentle, and bad; and we should give up the defence of it in as utter despair, as if it had neither priests nor altars, neither hospitals nor alms-houses.

We hope to show by some simple discriminations, that we have no cause so to despair of ourselves as a people; whatever may be said by foreign tourists who scan our manners in a month, or study our domestic usages in a steamboat. And we offer one of these discriminations, by saying, in the first place, that there are certain things, not attaching to us as a people, and yet found among us, which we freely give up to "the whips and scorns" of whosoever pleases to lay upon them the lash and the sting.

The manners, for instance, of some of the members of our legislative assemblies — and must we say? of the highest — we give up; we have not a word to say in defence or extenuation. This only will we say, that if there be men who have found their way into the legislature, rather than the wrestling-ring or the cock-pit — if there be such men who have given the lie, or lifted the hand and struck the vulgar blow, in the majestic halls of public debate — if there be such men who are

not made to feel the weight of that dishonour so long as they live,—we do not know, and we do not wish to know, the people and the public sentiment of this country. Ah! if they could understand with what bitter and insupportable shame, every American, in every land, hangs his head when these things are mentioned, they might pardon something of the indignation with which we write. We would that our countrymen might be aroused to consider this matter most seriously; and that, when such a man presents himself before them for re-election, they would say to him, "No, sir; we are seeking a statesman, not a pugilist."

Again; the character of the newspaper press has been made the matter of heavy reproaches against us. It has been made the subject of elaborate articles in the foreign journals. We must think there has been some injustice, some want of discrimination in the case. From the innumerable columns of the daily press, written in haste and weariness often, it might be expected that many objectionable passages could be selected, and when these are spread out side by side, it is easy to see that a false impression may be created. But still, no observing and thoughtful man among us, can help admitting, unless he be restrained by the sheerest cowardice, that the character of our newspapers deserves much of the reproach that is cast upon it. Many of their editors, we believe, see and feel this as much as others. We have heard more than one of them admit, that even the vexatious prosecutions for libel by one of our distinguished authors have done good. If nothing of this sort were admitted, if the press stood up in its own defence we should like to see it tried by its own testimony. Look at the party prints, for instance. What unprincipled, nefarious, outrageous, lying prints are they all, by the judgment of their opponents! But we are afraid we must press this evidence a little farther; into the barriers of the same party. Look at the rival prints of our cities. Within any period of a year or two, we know of one city at least, in which not one of them, nor one of their editors, escapes the charge of being malignant, base, indecent, and reckless of all truth and principle. If this were bad taste only, it were bad enough; but certainly it is something much worse. The truth is, printing has become almost as common as talking; and we have in it, therefore, almost all the freedom of talk, without the restraints of personal presence. It is, in some sort, like an anonymous letter; always the most reckless and abusive of all writing, because of the veil that covers the attack. In short, we have come to a new era in printing. Newspaper freedom never before tried any people to the same extent; the peril of it has come upon us unsuspected; we have fallen into the mistakes incident to a new and untried state of things, and we must look to the teachings of experience, and to the corrective power of public sentiment, as they have helped us always and everywhere, to help us here.

Much good satire has been expended upon a minor immorality of our manners, in defence of which we have nothing to say but this,—that we never saw the transgression. What may be done in bar-rooms, in steamboats, and railroad cars, we say not — we need not describe nor defend it; these places are out of doors to many people. But speaking of what passes in-doors, and from thirty or forty years' observation of this country, and from a pretty wide circle of intercourse, we say,

taxing our memory to the utmost, that we never saw any person spit on a carpet or parlour-floor in America. Wherever the fault lies, there let the reprobation fall; but to multitudes among us, this representation of foreign tourists, as a general one, must be a matter of as unmixed surprise, as if they had said, that we keep bears in our parlours, or settle our fire-side discussions with fisticuffs.

With regard to our manners on the whole, while there is, doubtless, less of ease and polish than in the higher circles of Europe, where men live in and for society almost entirely, and less of a certain civility and kindliness than in the humbler classes abroad, educated for ages to deference and respect; yet there is a self-respect among our people, and a delicacy and consideration of different classes in the treatment of one another, and a freedom from mannerism, from hackneyed and heartless forms—the devices of modern etiquette, or the stereotypes of old precision—all of which we value, and value as the results of our better and juster political condition. Manners are the mirror of a people's mind. And we believe that each class in this country, as compared with its respective class abroad, will be found, from its relative position, to have manners more manly, and sincere, and more just, as between man and man; the higher less assumption, the lower less sycophancy, and the middling classes decidedly more cultivation.

We are far from anxious, however, to defend our manners in all points. We think it easy to see that causes are at work, which for a time must have an unfavourable influence in this respect, while, in the long run, they are to elevate the character, and ultimately, indeed, the very manners of the people. The case of the nation, perhaps, may be illustrated by that of an individual. Compare an humble citizen of this country, rising into life, and having nothing but his good heart and hand to help him, with a man of a similar class in Europe. There, he is a labourer, always to depend for work and life, for the very soil on which he labours, upon others; a serf in Russia, a poor tenant in England. He is humble, civil, obsequious, quiet; he bears in his whole manner and being the stamp of an inferiority, from which he never hopes to escape; his very dress marks him out as a member of that class; he never aspires to rise above it; he reads little, perhaps he cannot read at all; he thinks little; his ideas revolve in a narrow circle; he agitates no questions of social prudence with his superiors; he scarcely feels himself to be a man in their presence, and in the sense in which they are men; he expects to die as he has lived, and his children are to live as he died; in fine, he is an orderly, decent, useful person, and from the high places of society, they look down upon him with complacency, for with them he is never to come into competition. Now look at the humble man of America. He is a backwoods-man, if you please. He owns the soil he treads upon; he pays neither rent, nor tithe, nor taxes, but by his own consent, and that of his peers. He acknowledges no master; he bows to no lord nor land-holder. All this may have an effect, and, for a time, a bad effect, upon his manners. He is free, fearless, uncourteous, reckless, perhaps, in his bearing; he seems almost lawless: the experiment looks not well. The traveller from another country, accustomed to homage from this class, looks upon him with displeasure, perhaps with disgust. He speaks his mind too freely, he does not take off his hat with sufficient deference. Something rough

and unamiable there is, perhaps, in his manner. He has not learned to vindicate himself in the right way. That which is struggling in his bosom, is not to be softened and humanized in a moment. O nature! poor human nature!—through errors and sorrows must thou work out thy welfare; and the thoughtful and considerate must wait for thee a little. Wait, then, we say, and look a little farther. Does not this man become in time a far more intelligent being than his fellow in Europe; with a wider range of thought and culture? Is he not more hopeful and strong-hearted? Does he not strike his spade into the soil that is his own, with a more willing energy and a more cheerful hope? Does not the light from the opening sky of his fortunes break clearer and stronger into the cloud of strife and passion? Yes, he rises. He rises in character, in culture, in dignity, and influence. He takes a place in society as hopeless to his brother in the Old World as the possession of fiefs and earldoms. His children after him rise to the highest places in the land.

This is a picture of the man in this country. This, in some sort, is a picture of the country. Is there a man on earth, with a human heart in his bosom, that does not rejoice in the spectacle; that does not sympathize with the experiment; that does not say, God speed it? No, there is no *man*. But there are — and they are not a few — distorted from the shape and nobleness of men, who hate the experiment, and wish it nothing but ill. Clothed in the robes of selfish grandeur, they would as soon think of taking their dogs into an equality with themselves, as of taking the mass of mankind. With this spirit is our quarrel. With this spirit is the quarrel of this country. And by all the hope of Christianity and faith in God, do we trust and believe that this country shall vindicate the great cause which is committed to it.

Yes, humanity—not knighthood nor nobility—the great, wide humanity, has its first, perhaps its last, fair, free chance here. Sighing and broken through ages, it wandered to this new world. It struck the virgin soil, and forth, from the great heart of the land, burst the word, FREEDOM! The waters of a thousand spreading bays and shores heard it. The winds took it up, and bore it over the wide sea. It smote the sceptre of injustice and oppression. It shook the thrones of the world. This is no mere figure: it is true. There is nothing which all the crowned tyrannies of the world fear and hate, like the example of America. We say not, the *crowns* of the world. We have no hostility to royalty as such. We have no hostility to it, if it can possibly be reconciled with a just and temperate freedom: and we see no necessary incompatibility between the two. But all the injustice that reigns, all the tyranny, all the oppression that *reigns* in the world, has its practical controversy now, with the example of America. If we can stand, they must fall. This is the great controversy: and may God defend the right!

Would that it were possible to impress upon the people of this country, a sense of their responsibility to God and men — to the world, and to the hopes of future ages. We have humbly attempted to defend our cause against the misgivings of the timid at home, and the mistakes of those who assail us from abroad. The fact is, they do not know this country. We perhaps ought to know better; and yet we, the most of us, have had no opportunity for comparing it with others. We have

never seen an American traveller, who in a just and manly spirit has really looked into the state of things in Europe, that did not bless, on his return, the land of his birth. But *they*, we repeat, do not know us. They have no idea of our fortunate condition. They have no idea of the freehold farms, the neat and thriving villages, and the happy and improving communities, that are spread all over this land. They do not know the spirit of this country. And yet we wonder that they do not observe, that almost all the great, moral, and humane reforms of the age have proceeded from it; Popular Education, the Temperance Reform, the Prison Discipline Reform, the kinder treatment in Asylums for the Insane, the Ministry for the Poor in Cities, and the Peace Society. Can the country be so morally bad, out of which such things have sprung?

But it is time that we should draw to a close. There has been one great example of Republican Government in ancient times, and it failed. We have stood upon its mournful ruins; and when asked there, what most impressed us in Rome, we answered, — "To stand still and think that this is Rome!" To stand indeed upon the Janiculum, or upon the Gardens of Sallust, and cast your eye around you; to think of the stupendous histories that have made their theatre within the range of your vision; to think what has passed *there*, — there where that momentary glance of your eye falls,—is to submit your mind to a more awful meditation than pertains to any other spot of earth, with one only exception. But those hills upon which has been enthroned the grandeur of successive Empires — what is written upon their now desolate seats? What is the lesson taught to the world by the sublimest history in the world? No historian, we doubt, has answered this question; for the philosophy of history has yet to be written.

But one question there is above all, which presses itself upon the American traveller, as he gazes upon that theatre of the old Roman story, and that is,—Are we, who have set the great modern example of Republican freedom, to be discouraged by the failure of that ancient experiment? Does the awful shadow of the past, that for ever lingers amidst those majestic ruins, point to the grand experiment that is passing on these shores, and say, "It is all in vain!" — to the labours of our statesmen and sages, and say, "They are all in vain!" — to the blood that has stained our hills and waters, and say, "It has been spilt in vain!" This is the great question that issues from that sepulchre of Roman grandeur—shall America fail?

God forbid! She must not, she will not fail. Christianity is here. Educated man is here. Vigour and hope, promise and prayer are here. Heaven, that spreads its fair sky over a fertile land, is with us. May it breathe its blessing into our people's heart, rich as our teeming earth; fresh and bright as the light and breezes of our sky!

THE END.

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